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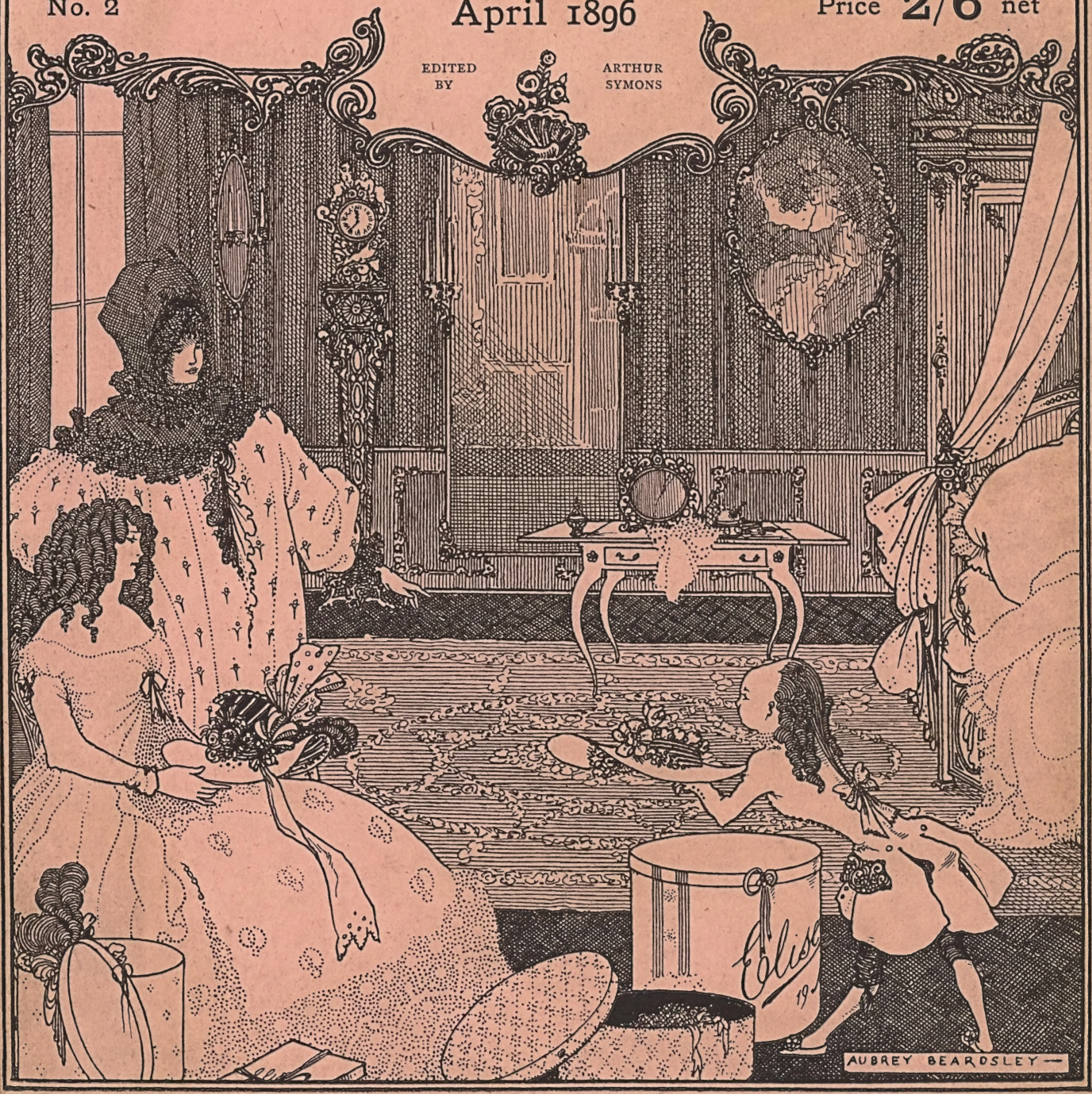
EDITED BY ARTHUR SYMONS



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THE SAVOY—N° II

THE SAVOY

No. 2
April
1896

EDITED
BY
ARTHUR
SYMONS

LEONARD SMITHERS
ARUNDEL STREET, STRAND
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1896.

THE SAVOY

EDITORIAL NOTE

IN presenting to the public the second number of "THE SAVOY," I wish to thank the critics of the press for the flattering reception which they have given to No. 1. That reception has been none the less flattering because it has been for the most part unfavourable. Any new endeavour lends itself, alike by its merits and by its defects, to the disapproval of the larger number of people. And it is always possible to learn from any vigorously expressed denunciation, not, perhaps, what the utterer of that denunciation intended should be learnt. I confess cheerfully that I have learnt much from the newspaper criticisms of the first number of "THE SAVOY." It is with confidence that I anticipate no less instruction from the criticisms which I shall have the pleasure of reading on the number now issued.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

April, 1896.

All communications should be directed to THE EDITOR OF THE SAVOY, *Effingham House, Arundel Street, Strand, London, W.C. MSS. should be type-written, and stamps inclosed for their return.*

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A MAD SAINT

A FEW months since a certain Maria G. appeared at my *clinique*. She was forty years of age, her voice was masculine in character, her forehead was high and remarkably broad, her jaw and cheek-bones more massive than we usually find in women. Her head also was somewhat above the average in size. Touch was rather obtuse, but sensitiveness to pain almost normal. It was observed, however, that she blushed only on one side of her face and forehead, and on this side also there was abundant perspiration, while the other side was quite dry and pale. Her father had died in an asylum ; her mother was healthy, and so were four brothers and a sister. This last, however, was subject to fits. She herself suffered from various neuralgic pains, and from hysterical convulsions.

As a girl she wished to become a nun ; but, instead, she married, at eighteen, a man whom she respected, but for whom she had no love. She married him, against the wishes of her friends, solely to obey the will of God. She has had eight children, of whom five are living.

Ever since she was a child she has heard voices, and seen wonderful visions of the Madonna and the saints ; also of evil spirits in the likeness of beasts, monsters which inspired her with great terror, and she was thus regarded as mad. This recalls what Calmeil tells us concerning various nuns, especially Maddalena, whose hallucinations began at five. But it was not until the age of fourteen, after being unwell for three days, that she had an apparition, in a great flash of light that filled the room, of God Himself, clothed in garments so dazzling that she could not fix her eyes upon Him, and bearing in His hand a sword which He placed across the bed. She still has such visual and auditory hallucinations very frequently ; at these times she ceases speaking, bends her head very low, and weeps. She tells also that she has seen the eyes in a little picture of Jesus fixed upon her full of love, and following her all over the house, and she says that one day she saw them closed, as a reproof to an offence on her part.

To the commands she has thus received from the *Volere Supremo*, she refers the greater number of her acts, and frequently offers no further justifica-

tion of them; thus she asserts that she was commanded by God to feign madness in order to enter an asylum, and there fulfil to the utmost her mission of fighting Satan, because there, she said, they whip people like beasts. Her acts were, in fact, so strange, that she was shut up in an asylum, where for some days she was the victim of further delirium, and she remained there for three years.

Now she lives at home, fairly tranquil, attending well to her domestic affairs, and to her occupation of straw-plaiting chairs. She dresses neatly, is devoted to her children, and weeps when she speaks of those who are dead. She weeps also when she tells of her mother's recent death, though latterly there had been no intercourse between them; so that her affection towards her family appears to be normal. With her husband also she gets on fairly well, although he reproves her for the strange ideas she has in her head, and once turned her out of the house. On the other hand she hates her mother-in-law, who interferes with the pleasure she takes in writing; thus she is not able to devote time to the laborious preparations of her very numerous manuscripts in verse and prose, except for a few hours after dawn, when she is alone. The verse, however, she composes in her head, not when she wishes to, but as it comes to her.

Her instincts appear to be chaste. She tells how, when she was a girl, she repelled the advances of a priest, and again, after she was married, of a canon, a monk, and an abbot. The education which she received as a child from her mother does not seem to have been very religious, at all events not sufficiently so to have determined her precocious inclinations. She only attended an elementary school, and cared little for reading afterwards; but she read over and over again a book of religious devotion entitled, "L'Anima Desolata Confortata a patire cristianamente," to which title she has added in her own handwriting, "Per Amor di Dio," and also the following remark:—"This book is the greatest treasure I have had in this world." Certainly her own writings, however strange and incomprehensible they may be, always manifest an intelligence above her condition and the instruction she has received.

She believes that, although wholly unworthy, she has been charged by the *Gran Sovran del Cielo* with an illuminative and redemptive mission among men; and regarding this mission she writes—in large and clear characters, with enormous capital letters and long strokes, in a fairly correct style—large pages of verse or long letters to alienists, to priests, to the King and Queen. The contents are uniformly the same; she announces her mission to each,

always saying that she is writing by command of God, and promising honour and profit to those who follow her. Yet from all her very numerous writings and oral declarations it is impossible to ascertain the ideas that lie at the basis of this mission ; perhaps her mind is not able to form such ideas ; perhaps she possesses that unconscious consciousness of absurdity which Amadei has acutely noted in mattoids. Once only she refers in her writings to the constitution of a *Compagnia dei Fedeli Cristiani* beneath the protection of the *Gran Madre Maria Addolorata ;* and in conversation she alludes to certain (imaginary ?) followers.

For the rest, she declares that she is inspired by the Virgin, although she is working for the Saviour ; she hates those who are outside the truth, and wishes to correct them and spiritualize them ; she would cut off the heads of the unfaithful with the tremendous sword of God, though this is only a spiritual weapon. She uses such ferocious metaphors frequently. She justified herself by saying that if any of the students who heard her declarations should go and repeat what they had heard to priests, it would be to these latter like the blow of a dagger.

She accepts Christian dogma, but with modifications. Thus when the *Gran Dio del Cielo* had driven Adam and Eve out of Paradise, He told them that He would send a woman to purify and "mend" the world. "And with all my demerits I am that woman, the servant of the great God, the queen of the whole world ; for in myself I am nothing, but in the name of the great God I am everything ; and if I accomplish any good thing here, the merit will be His." And in connection with this she calls herself, and often signs herself, "Regina Salviati," that is to say, "Queen of the Saved."

Repeatedly and insistently asked to expound to us her doctrines, she formulated them thus : If you want to be happy you have to learn how to thoroughly concentrate yourself in the great God of heaven and earth, and then to recognize in her the saviour, not as the supreme judge but as His representative, and she only recognizes those disciples who believe in Christ who died on the cross and in St. Joseph.

She respects the Christian Church, but wishes to pull up the evil weeds, that is to say, bad priests, whom she considers responsible for the wickedness of the world, but with strange want of logic she carries out all religious practices.

The Madonna cannot be the mother of God who is uncreated, because otherwise she would be the supreme principle ; only as the handmaid of His

spirit has God permitted her to be worshipped. The spirit of Christ will reappear in the world in the person of a certain priest, a brother of hers, and then there will be a general day of judgment, which she announces as near, and the justice of God having assured the triumph of the just on earth, the world will live a better life, and will not end in a shower of fire, as the priests say. This idea of the reform of the world is certainly the same as that of Christ, who, as Renan says in his "Vie de Jésus," when seated as judge of the world in the midst of His apostles, is the exact representation of that conception of the Son of man, the first lines of which are already to be seen so strongly drawn in the Book of Daniel. But she lessens and abuses the conception by, for instance, apportioning the duties we are each to have in the reformed world. She naturally promises a different future to the good and those who respect her sayings from that ordained for the bad, "because God has not made Heaven for traitors, and Hell to be kept empty;" she will pardon if God will pardon; if not, she is ready to put a dagger (probably always a spiritual weapon) into the hearts of those traitors.

Of all this she speaks confusedly, as if she did not wish to be interrupted in her discourse, but she converses much and willingly. She distributes her numerous manuscripts, nearly all in verse, to the students. She frequently sings the Psalms in Latin with passionate animation and large movements of the arms, explaining the significance of what she sings. There is a notable tendency to musical intonation in her replies to the questions put to her, which she sometimes sings, always adapting the same air to her various poems. The metre of these is, however, nearly always the same, very sonorous, in rhymed quatrains of ten syllables; but the rhymes are often only assonances, and the last line of each stanza is cut short. Sometimes while singing she falls into a condition of true ecstasy; the eyeballs are turned upwards, the eyelids become fixed, the arms extended, and she is able to support a much stronger electric current than that which gives her pain under normal conditions.

This persistent use of melody and rhythm certainly represents an atavistic return to primitive musical methods of expression which commonly accompanied emotional states among our ancestors. It is a kind of mental palæontology, as Letourneau also has noted;[1] and it corresponds exactly to the vague, uniform, undifferentiated condition of her ideas.

[1] "Revue de l'École d'Anthropologie," Nov. 15th, 1892.

The whole of this attitude, the convinced and absolute fashion in which she enunciates her dogmas, the security with which in every great contingency of life she trusts to the voice of the *Volere Supremo*, not only recall and in part repeat what all the saints of religious history have done, but they explain the force of attraction, and the suggestive power, which such phenomena exerted on popular masses under other conditions of culture and feeling.

It is also instructive to note her method of action, which is described as by divine impulse, working through an automaton. "Under spiritual influence," she says, "a person is not free, and I am even compelled to act for my own temporal disadvantage, without any reserve, ready to undergo martyrdom, even if the gibbet were standing ready; and if the least act on my part, even the slightest word, would save me from martyrdom, I would not try to save myself, not for the whole world." "Pushed on," she writes, "by a supreme spiritual power, I set down these things, writing all that the supreme spirit suggests to me to write." She declared, also, that she "was driven" by God to come to the *clinique*, although she doubted if she would find anyone there.

Thus her own personality occupies nearly the whole of her mind, her conversation, her writings; and, as if to accentuate this characteristic, she always writes the personal pronouns referring to herself with an initial capital. And yet amid the chaos and simplicity of her ideas, the uniformity and commonplace of their manifestation, a stroke of genius here and there flashes across the insanity. One day she improvised a logical and excellent discourse to the university students who were late in their attendance, lamenting the recent disorders among them as not only evil in themselves, but as bringing grief and shame to the professors, etc. Among her very numerous writings in verse, slovenly and full of errors as they often are, some are really beautiful, and contain phrases and passages marked by fine feeling and insight. "The justice of the great God of Heaven," she writes, "is not paid by gold or silver." "My mind," she writes again (in words that, in the original, tend to run into rhyme), "will only ally itself with reverence and justice; and my heart is not caught save by reverence and gentleness." And in verse: "But the sorrowing servant—Of our Lord—Possesses new hopes.—Already his heart opens.—O you who live—In a deceitful world,—Open your eyes—To the true light." And again: "I am no woman of proud ways—I am the handmaid of our Lord;—On my head there is a crown—All adorned with laurel and honour.—I am faithful to the everlasting Lord—And no deceit can make

me waver:—And though I am but a lowly flower—I am queen of the great deep sea.[1]"

Yet these fugitive gleams of mental brilliancy not only heighten the general vacuity, but accentuate strange references and hints, sudden falls into the commonplace, and often the comic, which, with their painful contrasts, characterize the psychic contents of such unbalanced brains. For example: "I will take him up into the train and conduct him to eternal life;" "I will give myself up to the *Gran Voler Supremo* and leave to his lordship to consider with the telescope of the Just and Supreme Divine Justice this my deposition."

Nor are there also lacking in her writings and her discourse those frequent and insistent repetitions of words, the strange metaphorical appellations, the emphatic air, which give a special imprint of solemnity to the religious style of every epoch. Here also these characters are due to analogous conditions, that is to say, that all effort is applied to the task of impressing the imagination of the hearers by vaporous and solemn phrases, rather than to that of convincing them by the force of reason; it is as though the evidence of the proclaimed truths disdained—and with good reason—all human arguments. "Tell me, my children," she writes, "what have you done for me to acquire the strongest affection of my heart? Nothing: then it is God who deigns to bind my heart to a lofty and supernatural affection towards you." "To write of my Lord I have detached myself from all the things of the world, and they who would follow me must also detach themselves from the things of the world . . . with the sole thought of serving God faithfully in order to win the great prize of honour for eternal life." "Oh, this miserable and unworthy creature that I am, Thy miserable and unworthy servant, Thy miserable and unworthy daughter . . . and I will say it again and again."

To the same unfailing elements of every religious movement belong the prophecies which M. makes concerning the coming of God on earth, the approaching universal judgment, and the glorious and fruitful future which awaits the good cause, as well as certain miracles which she has already accom-

[1] "Non son donna di vani costumi,
Son l' ancella del nostro Signor;
Sul mio capo ci sta una corona
Tutta guarnita di lauro e d' onor.
Io son costante all' eterno Signore,
E niun inganno puo farmi tremar:
E bench' Io sia un misero fiore . . .
Son Regina dell' alto gran mar."

plished, professing that she has prevented an outbreak of war between Africa and Italy.

To this now well-defined form of religious insanity are associated, as often happens, though usually in a more accentuated degree, erotic insanity and the insanity of persecution. This last, however, is very slight and is directed in part against the priests, in part against the attendants and sisters at the asylum, and especially the doctor under whose care she was placed, and against whom, with much abusive language, she brings the usual vague accusations of offences against her spirit and body.

The erotic element is more distinctly marked; in her writings and discourses M. frequently recalls the name of a young gentleman who "because of his religious wanderings" had to suffer grave danger in Africa, from which danger she and no other could deliver him, or, as she says, "repair him in body and mind from that terrible exile, offering her life to the Great God of Heaven to expiate the faults accounted for guilt to Christians." In the same way, but more explicitly, she expresses herself in her verses, which reflect her thoughts more faithfully and unconsciously. In these are many expressions of affection and praise concerning this youth, whom she invokes as the imaginary head of armies, a dear companion and man of pure faith; as well as in the replies, strangely veiled in spiritual mysticism, which she makes to questions on this subject. She confesses also that she recalls seeing some of her visions of God under the aspect of this gentleman. Yet she only appears to have seen him occasionally, and it is not possible to guess the circumstances which may have caused, if they have not justified, the direction which M.'s erotic affections have taken.

Altruism, which is the highest and noblest human note in the doctrines and works of nearly all great religious reformers—as though from the mystic contemplation of the superhuman, and man's annihilation before it, grew a more vivid feeling of the equality and fraternity of all human creatures—shows itself, though only by brief hints, in the writings of M. In several places she affirms that she would do nothing to avoid martyrdom, not fearing prisons, nor kings, nor anything else, but only the Virgin. And in alluding to the poor she exclaims: "O you miserable of the earth, oppressed by pain," offering them guidance and help; and again, when she asserts she had feigned madness, so that she had almost voluntarily entered an asylum because the *Volere Supremo* had laid on her the burden of a mission to men. In this way she often declares herself mad, and signs her name as the poor Maria of the mad people—"povere Maria dei pazzi"—as a title that the Lord had given

her. All this, however, contrasts with her rebellion against the doctors and attendants on entering the asylum; this was indeed so violent that it rendered necessary the application of the strait-jacket.

Apart from this, it is certain that her mind is not able to appreciate, and still less to conceive, the whole sublimity of the idea of altruism. Such incapacity is revealed in the poverty and individualism of all her conceptions, as well as by the strangeness and inco-ordination into which any informing idea, any trace of system, rapidly falls. Yet the neuropathic foundation, certain analogies of expression, certain other psychic affinities, render her a crude and rudimental example of a saint, a religious reformer.

I have presented this case in all its details, excluding the more technical, because it really constitutes a valuable document which shows us, in the first place, how genius often arises from a matrix of insanity. Here is an ordinary uneducated woman who suddenly becomes a poet, in a rude fashion, and an inventor of musical rhythms. But perhaps the phenomenon is more interesting from the point of view of hagiology, because of the light it throws on sanctity. This workwoman who thought more of others than of herself, who troubled herself all day long over public morality, who justly reproves the university students, who robs herself of her due nightly rest, after fulfilling all her family duties, in order to devote herself to her religious writings, presents a manifestation of sanctity, also breaking forth from the matrix of paranoia, in evidence of the effect of hereditary insanity.

It is true that such cases are very rare: among thousands of mad people I have only met with this case: whether it is that in such persons the accompanying delusions of persecution, ambition, etc., too greatly preoccupy the mind to leave any care for the hagiological form, or that it here assumes a more prominent form by virtue of greater intelligence and greater energy.

But perhaps the cause of this rarity may be of a very different order. It is probable that the prevalence of saints in past ages, as compared with our own days, may be first of all due to the fact that religious preoccupations being to-day less intense, men are driven mad in quite other pursuits, their diseases arising from other pretexts and taking on a different veneer. And, again, the public among us being indifferent to such ideas, even when they do arise, these mad saints find none to listen to them; and if they insist, like this woman, they are at last secluded in an asylum. Three or four centuries ago she would have attracted followers, founded monasteries, carried away crowds; she would have become a historical event. It is sad to reflect on the

fate of so many men of genius, born before their time, or in lands incapable of understanding them, and dying sterilized, when they were not killed as rebels or heretics. Even among ourselves to-day, indeed, it is only after death that such men are admired and honoured.

The germ of holiness, as well as that of genius, must be sought among the insane.

C. LOMBROSO.

(*Translated by Havelock Ellis.*)

Classic London

by

Joseph Pennell

NEW YEAR'S EVE

E heard the bells of midnight burying the year.
Then the night poured its silent waters over us.
And then, in the vague darkness, faint and tremulous,
Time paused ; then the night filled with sound ; morning was here.
Time paused ; our hearts were silent ; only your eyes burned
Out of the night as though lit to consume my heart.
The insane anger of love seized and became a part
Of your incarnate spirit ; and your spirit yearned
In such an agonizing ecstasy of desire
Unto my spirit waiting to be lost in you,
Spirit to spirit was fused in living flame ; and neither knew,
In that transfiguring ardency of perfect fire,
Body from body, spirit from spirit, life from death.
Only we knew, as flaming silence wrapt the past,
We had escaped the shadowy labyrinth at last ;
Only we knew, as brooding silence, like the breath
Of the overshadowing wings of the creating Dove,
Descended on our hearts, and filled our hearts with peace,
Love, born to be immortal, until all time cease,
Was born of us anew, to be immortal love.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

A MERE MAN

I

THE Clubs were full, and busy with gossip. The new beauty (an American) had been presented to a royal prince, and the old beauty of three seasons ago was engaged to be married, engaged to an eligible man too, a certain Leonard Standish, whose father came of a good old stock, and had left him a pretty place in Yorkshire, and a decent amount of money. A young man of twenty-eight, a favourite on the race-course and in London drawing-rooms, with a handsome face, and a simple, unaffected manner, a reputation not too bad, and a record cleaner than most men's; a man his own sex liked, and dubbed a "damned good fellow," and the other sex considered straight and honourable, he was up to date in all but his immorality, and the little there had been of that was decidedly behind the times.

The girl was a tall slim creature, with an aristocratic face, thin, delicate, pink lips, large, brilliant gray eyes, a thin nose, a well-shaped chin, and pretty, well-groomed hair. Her father, a Major in the Guards, was dead. Her mother was a well-known woman about town. Her brothers were equally divided between the Stock Exchange and the Army, and their friends were nice young men with squeaky voices.

She knew London well, had wearied of balls after her first season, had taken an interest in racing the second, and in Leonard Standish the third. During the ball-room epidemic she had been engaged to young Charlton, in the Guards, and had thrown him over at the last minute because he bored her. During the racing epidemic she had been engaged to Bernard Chitty, who had suddenly disappeared to Africa, and society talked with little result. Her third year was crowned with success. The royal prince had wearied of her, it is true, but she was engaged elsewhere, and her mother, her relations, and her friends were pouring congratulations from every quarter.

She was to be married in April, and was busy discussing a proposed visit to Paris in search of chiffons on a cold dreary February afternoon, as her

carriage drove down Park Lane, while her mother waxed fretful because a hand-glass reflected a somewhat reddened nose.

"My dear Aimée," Mrs. Bentley Cardross was saying, as she dabbed a minute powder-puff all over her face, "it's so very tiresome. You haven't noticed, I'm sure. The tip of my nose has been quite frost-bitten, and is reviving in a peculiarly painful manner. Do sympathize, dear."

Her daughter did not reply.

"So annoying that man never sending my new cloak home. I'm frozen, dear, frozen, I assure you."

The girl glanced at her quickly, and looked away again.

"You seem covered with fur," she remarked.

"Have you seen Leonard to-day, dear?" inquired Mrs. Bentley Cardross, with a nervous smile.

"No."

"He was going——"

"I don't know where he was going. He is coming to dinner to-night."

"Of course, dear, of course."

"I've asked Mrs. Sharpe."

"My dear girl, do you think you are quite wise? She is not *quite* all I could wish; and Leonard is so dreadfully particular."

"She is my friend."

"I know, of course, I know; but her husband is so very racy, and always smells of the stables; and she will smoke before dinner is half over, and I know Leonard will look at her with that tiresomely grave face which always makes me wish to shake him. After you are married——"

"That odious phrase! Let us leave that time to the future, mamma."

"Very well, dear, if you like. I am sure I am quite busy enough to find plenty to say about the present. But Mrs. Sharpe wants to flirt with every man she meets. She will look up at Leonard, with those pathetic eyes of hers, until she drives me mad."

"Of course she looks pathetic. Her husband is a perfect brute to her."

"Oh, no doubt!"

"And unless she nags on at him for about an hour, he won't even allow her to dine with us."

"How unjust."

"And if she is just a little late in coming home, he goes and gets drunk."

"My dear, you shock me."

The daughter smiled.

"Do I, mamma?" she inquired; and then she leaned forward, and waved her hand to a man in a passing hansom.

"Who was it, dear?" cried her mother. "Do tell me."

"Only Leonard. Who can he be going to see in Park Lane? That horrid stiff Lady Jane Graham, I suppose. Perhaps she was a friend of his mother's."

"My dear! She's only thirty-seven."

"And looks more."

"Well, Aimée, as a well-preserved woman myself, I never scoff at those who are stupid enough to show their years. They are usually religious people, and go often to the holy communion, and that's so tiring,—the kneeling I mean; if you once get down it's so difficult to get up again, at my age. Don't you think so?"

"I didn't hear what you were saying. Is it worth repeating again?"

Her mother flushed crimson, and took up the hand-glass with a shaking hand.

"No, dear, no," she said, timidly. "Of course not."

* * * * * * * *

Lady Jane Graham was at home, and would see Mr. Leonard Standish.

She was a tall woman, with a graceful face, a graceful figure, and a manner that was her chief charm. As she rose, with a smile, to welcome him, her deep voice had a peaceful sound, and her eyes a look which reminded him somehow of a church, and there was a faint scent somewhere, suggestive of incense.

"How are you?" she began. "I am very glad to see you. Come and sit near the fire and tell me all your news. Harold has gone down to Langham, and I had that pretty little May Egerton staying with me for a few days. They are repairing the village church, and Harold bought a new horse, which he wants you to see. That is all my news in one breath. Aren't you relieved?"

He took a tea-cup from her hand, and smiled. A few seconds were devoted to his questions about her husband, her friends, and to her answers. She was a woman whose whole household is always of interest to her acquaintances, and Leonard Standish had a closer claim than that. He had been a staunch friend to her brother, a handsome young scapegrace, who slept in a foreign grave.

She read people cleverly, and described them aptly. She was a woman who clung to old-fashioned ideas, and conventional thought. She had a kind

heart, and a sensitive nature, under a masked dignity which seemed like pride.

"You are to be married in April," she said.

"Yes, in April—the seventeenth."

"Have you settled where you will go afterwards?"

"Lord Arthur said he would lend us his place in Suffolk. Aimée knows him very well. He seems a nice kind of chap. I was at Eton with him."

"And your house—have you settled on it?"

"Yes, it's in Cadogan Square." There was a pause, Leonard Standish put his hand up to his dark hair, and smoothed it.

Lady Jane feigned not to watch him, and touched some lilies of the valley in a vase near with long, shapely fingers. She knew well that he had something to say to her, and she knew also that she would prefer him not to say it. There was only one course open to her, however, to be patient and sympathetic, and to listen to him when he chose to speak.

"I met that young Captain Cardross the other night. He is a handsome boy."

"Yes," his future brother-in-law admitted. "But I wish he didn't try so hard to be smart."

"Isn't that the fault of the age? And youth reflects the age."

"I think I like Jack Cardross best."

"He's on the Stock Exchange, isn't he?"

"Yes. He's an awfully sharp fellow. Gets on very well. Is rather too full of scandal, though. That sort of promiscuous soiling of characters makes me sick."

"I only met him once," Lady Jane said gravely; "and I fancy that his words are bigger than his deeds. He is probably more harmless than he likes to be thought. I should distrust the captain more."

"Would you. How funny! But then you always have queer ideas about people, and you are always right."

Lady Jane smiled.

"Have some more tea," she said; "and tell me what you know of a Mrs. Sharpe."

"Oh! she's a friend of Aimée's. A pretty little woman. I met her at Sandown."

"I saw her once at a theatre. Harold knew her husband slightly; he is a racing man I fancy."

There was a pause.

"You didn't like Mrs. Sharpe," Standish blurted out.

"No, not much."

"I say, Lady Jane," he began, "I am in an awful fix, and I want to ask you something. You won't mind, will you?"

"Do you think I am the right person to ask?"

"I'm sure of it. The fact is, I couldn't question anyone else. It would seem so disloyal."

"My dear Leonard, it is so foolish to ask a friend anything. The only things worth knowing we all find out for ourselves."

"I don't think I understand," the man answered. "I'm awfully worried and bothered, and I thought you'd help me."

"Well, tell me what it is."

"People are saying beastly things——"

"People?"

"Well, one woman."

"Oh! Go on."

"About some one I love very much—a great friend of mine—a woman I respect. I say, Lady Jane, you must guess, you know. It was about Aimée."

"Was the authority good?"

"Good! How do you mean?"

"Was the woman who said the things reliable?"

"No, not very, I should think. It didn't strike me before."

"Had she any motive for wishing to destroy your belief in Miss Cardross?"

"Motive? Women always think there must be a motive at the root of everything."

Lady Jane laughed. "Because there usually is. But you haven't answered my question."

"Oh, well, I don't know. She used rather to like me, perhaps. A man feels such a cad when he says a thing like that."

"Not to me," said his friend, not from vanity, but to reassure him. "Well, then, if she spoke from jealousy, I think we may dismiss the matter."

"You don't think it's true."

"If she was the only maligner——"

"Oh, there it is! I've heard other people long ago hint—about—about all sorts of things."

"That is rather vague if you want me to dispute them."

"I do. That's just it. I want you to tell me that Aimée is all right. A

nice, good girl, as nice as she is beautiful. I'm really awfully fond of her. I can't tell you how fond. I never felt so strongly about anything before. She is so lovely, and so sweet, and I like to hear her talk: she's awfully clever too. I don't know what I should do if I believed all those horrid things."

Lady Jane blushed. She had a trick of flushing pink when anything distressed her. Her glance fell on the picture of a grave on a distant table, and she remembered her brother as he had looked years before the end. If he had been alive, he could have spoken where her mouth was sealed. She could not take the responsibility of settling Leonard's whole future for him in that way. And she could not ruin a young girl's chances of happiness by a word or sign.

"What do you want me to say?" she asked.

"Tell me if you know anything."

"I know"—she slightly and conscientiously emphasized the word "know"—"I know nothing against Miss Cardross. Rumour has dealt with her as it deals with every woman celebrated for her beauty—that is, unjustly, always. It overpraises her outward appearance, and depreciates her soul. It claims the right to attack her character, as it cannot attack her face. Had I a child,"—her voice altered—"had I been lucky enough to have a child, and she a girl, I should have wished her any curse but beauty, and any misery but brains. If a beautiful woman is attacked and smiles, a clever one is ten times more abused, and she doesn't smile—she is usually wretchedly alive to all that is said, and miserably sensitive about it. Why, Leonard, you cannot possess a pearl without the world deigning to envy you. It is the fate of all lucky men."

"Yes, of course, I am awfully lucky."

"Don't let spiteful women frighten you, or reckless men startle you. They mean only half of what they hint, and a quarter of what they say. A man's gossip is usually the most harmless thing in the world. He tells a scandalous story because it is naughtily amusing, not to ruin a woman's reputation, and he speaks lightly of a good name, because he has lost his own so long ago that he has forgotten the value of it."

Leonard Standish turned a puzzled face towards his hostess.

"I suppose I've bored you terribly," he said.

"Certainly not."

"You—you don't think me a cad for coming to ask you such questions."

"I have never known you do anything that could possibly earn you that obnoxious title."

"But, Lady Jane, will you let me tell you exactly what I did hear, so that you won't think I was worried over a mere nothing, a mere breath of scandal."

"My dear Leonard, I don't want to know. I can trust you not to have mentioned those rumours without reason, and such mud has a nasty trick of sticking to one's mind, and I want never to be reminded of anything but good of your wife. Take care that none of the mud clings on to you."

"You are quite right. Quite right. I can't thank you enough."

"Where are you dining to-night—not with Lady Ralston, I fear."

"No, are you going there? I am dining with Mrs. Cardross. I haven't seen Aimée to-day—at least not to speak to. I passed her, as I was driving here, looking awfully pretty. Her mother was there too."

"Her mother." Lady Jane flushed pink. "I don't know Mrs. Cardross."

"She's—she's awfully good-natured."

"Yes, I heard she was."

"Rather careless, you know, but devoted to her children. The boys really do know an awful set of men. I met Dottie Leighton, and Freddie Williams with them at the Empire the other night. You don't know them, of course."

"Only by sight. You mean some pretty boys who are always in the Park on Sunday. They look harmless enough, as if all their time were spent in choosing a necktie to match their eyes."

Leonard Standish rose to go. He seized Lady Jane's long fingers impulsively. You've been awfully good to me," he said, "I can't thank you half enough. I'm not a bit worried now."

She smiled a little sadly.

"Come and see me again soon, Leonard," she said, "and bring Miss Cardross with you."

"Of course I will, she will love to come, I know. Good-bye."

Lady Jane stood and listened to his hansom wheels as he drove away. A dark, foggy evening was closing in, and she went to the window and looked out. His cab was a mere speck in the mist, the street lights twinkled uneasily through the smoke, and the roar of London was muffled to her ears.

"I wonder," she thought, "if I have done wrong that good may come." And the smoke, and the fog, and the darkness closed round the lucky man.

II

One warm Sunday morning in May, when the park was bright with lilac and laburnum and the pink blossom of the chestnut trees, a small group of people

were congregated near the Achilles statue. A slight breeze toyed with the lace veil of one of the women, and the large black feathers in the other's hat. The men were mostly young, and unmistakably smart. One of them was biting the end of a prayer book, absently, forgetting that he carried it for Mrs. Lionel Boyne, whose large rebellious veil claimed all her attention for the moment.

"Yes, the Standish *ménage* has returned," Mrs. Sharpe was saying, "I saw her yesterday, she says they had a splendid time in Paris. I asked no questions about Lord Arthur's place, it must have been deadly dull. Fancy my being buried in the country with Bob. I should commit suicide after one day. And I'm sure Bob's the most good-natured creature in the world."

"Dear lady," cried Dottie Leighton, quickly, "don't mention suicide, it's so nasty."

"Besides we couldn't spare you," said a heavy Colonel, with a smile. He liked the pathetic eyes to be raised slowly and pleadingly towards his own, and Mrs. Sharpe's gentle affected manner pleased him.

Mrs. Boyne overheard and turned round. "I never can remember how I spent the honeymoon with Lionel, I suppose I bored him to death. I know he bored me. Isn't that Dolly Marker over there, the new burlesque dancer, that people are so mad about, and it's Bernard Chitty with her? What a joke!"

The ladies both laughed, Dottie laughed, the powdered and red-lipped Freddie Williams became convulsed with merriment. Colonel Ashby alone failed to see the joke, and wondered what the devil they all meant.

"Aimée doesn't know he is in England," said Mrs. Sharpe.

"Does anyone know the truth of that story?" asked Mrs. Boyne.

"I suppose Bernard found out something," suggested Mrs. Sharpe.

"What do you mean?" a fourth man inquired, abruptly.

"Oh, I really don't know, Mr. Franklin," said the lady in a hurry. "I am devoted to Aimée myself, and think her husband is a dear—so fond of her, too —it is quite charming to see them together."

"Talk of an angel," said Franklin, going forward, "and here she is. We were just discussing your domestic bliss, Mrs. Standish."

The girl looked her best, she had a becoming pink colour, and wore a Paris costume. Leonard Standish had a face which smiled on all the world, and if ever a man expressed contentment, he did, with his clear fresh voice and his bright smile.

"It was so awfully nice in Paris," he explained to Mrs. Sharpe; "we went

everywhere, and saw everything. We heard Guilbert sing, and did all the theatres, and gave some jolly little dinners at Voisin's, and chez Paillard. You ought to get Bob to take you over for a few days. Paris is lovely just now."

"Oh, Bob never will take me anywhere, the old idiot is far too mad on racing."

Mrs. Boyne rustled up to Aimée. "Dearest," she said, in a shrill voice, "have you seen Dolly Marker and the latest victim? It is such a joke, as he is a newly married man."

"Who is? and where are they?"

"Over there under those hawthorn trees." Mrs. Standish put up a lorgnette. It dropped suddenly, and the glass and tortoise-shell broke in twenty pieces on the gravel.

"Dear lady! How dreadful!" cried Freddie Williams. "I must get you a new one."

"I'll send you one from Paris," said Dottie.

"What made you drop it?" asked her husband.

Her cold face chilled him, as she said with an almost imperceptible sneer, "Carelessness, I suppose, but I really don't know."

Mrs. Sharpe looked pensive, Mrs. Boyne smiled.

Later, Aimée said suddenly, "When, and where did Bernard marry?"

"Oh, in Australia," Franklin replied. "He picked up a piece of gold, rubbed the dust off, and has brought it home to be polished. She's a large woman with auburn hair. She's his only mistake."

"Where is your husband, Mrs. Boyne?" asked the girl.

"He's lost just at present. He's awfully clever at losing himself, you know."

Mrs. Sharpe turned round with her pensive smile, and raised eyebrows.

"M' dear," she said, clipping her words, and looking reproachful, "don't speak of the poor man like that. Perhaps he wants to be found."

"If you would like to go and hunt for Bob," proposed her friend, "I daresay he's somewhere in the park."

"Dear Bob," sighed Mrs. Sharp, "I wonder if he is."

"I wish I were a woman, and newly married," cried Mr. Williams. "It must be so nice wearing all one's new frocks."

"Oh, you naughty thing," Mrs. Sharpe said, and then laughed.

"Did Standish take you to the Moulin Rouge?" inquired Freddie.

Her husband turned round.

"Come home now, Aimée," he said. "We shall be late for lunch."

"All right, Leonard;" she drew him a little aside. "You don't mind, do you—I've asked Dottie and Freddie to lunch?"

"Not those brutes, have you?"

"Yes, why not?"

"Oh, very well, only it's the last time."

"The first, you mean. I shall invite whom I please."

"Not to my house, while I'm in it."

"Then you can go out, dear. I can't waste any more time now. Come on, Dottie, we're off now."

The rest of the party watched them crossing the row.

"She's a lovely woman!" Colonel Ashby exclaimed.

"She's thoroughly smart," agreed the two women.

"Her husband," Franklin said slowly, "is the best chap I know. I only hope she'll treat him decently. He will cut up rough if she plays any of her old games, poor fellow."

"You didn't let me talk like that about Aimée, and now you've done it yourself."

"My dear Mrs. Bob, you hinted at something before those two boys, which means that all London will know who said it to-morrow, that is all. The Standish husband and wife have quite enough before them, without our adding to their troubles. No good ever came out of the Cardross family yet, and I don't believe it ever will. Come and dine at the Savoy with me to-night and I'll tell you some naughty stories. We won't ask Bob."

* * * * * * *

One warm June day, a month later, Leonard Standish went into his wife's room directly after breakfast. The window was wide open, and above the geraniums and mignonette in the flower-box he saw a perfect blue sky, and brilliant sunshine.

"What a jolly day!" he exclaimed, "I say, Aimée, are you ill?"

His glance fell on some brandy and seltzer in a tumbler on the dressing-table.

"Yes," she admitted fretfully. "Dreadfully seedy, dear. Don't worry."

"Then why on earth do you go out?"

"How absurd you are. I've promised to go shopping with Ada Sharpe and there is Hurlingham this afternoon."

"Oh, yes, I forgot. Shall I come back and take you there?"

His wife shook the powder-puff all over his coat-sleeve, and then drew a dark line under each eye.

"No need, dear," she remarked, and then seeing his face reflected behind her own in the mirror, she added quickly, "I am going with the Chittys."

"You are always with those people," Leonard said.

"I thought you liked her," his wife retorted.

"Well, I do like her—why not? I like that sort of fresh woman, with her big honest face, and auburn hair. There is something straight about her which is very rare."

"She's a damned good fellow, in fact," laughed Aimée.

"What beastly language you use. I say, don't drink all that B. and S. It's an awfully stiff one."

Her eyes danced with fun over the rim of the glass.

"You silly boy," she said, "it won't hurt me. Do you think I've got a head like mamma?"

"Your mother can stand a good deal," said Leonard, stiffly.

"I sent Mary down for ten minutes, and she's been an hour. Ring for her, will you?"

"No, not for a second. I want to talk to you. I say, Aimée, really I wish you wouldn't go about with the Chittys so much. He's one of a horrid set of men, and although she's an awfully nice woman, she isn't quite a lady. It does you such harm with decent people."

"You are always grumbling at my friends. Pass me that rouge, dear, will you?"

"Oh, don't, you've got an awfully pretty colour of your own. Let the nasty stuff alone." Leonard Standish touched his wife's hair timidly, and added very gently, "I like you as you are, Aimée, darling, not messed up with all that stuff."

She shook his hand off. "Don't be silly," she remarked, "you know you don't mind it really."

He look puzzled. "I don't in other women," he admitted, "but somehow I hate it in my wife."

"I must get on with my dressing, and you hinder me. If you haven't anything else to say, you'd better go."

Her husband went half across the room, and then returned.

"Can you come and call on Lady Jane, to-morrow?" he asked, "we've never been near her since our marriage, and she came here three weeks ago, when we were out."

"I can't bother, she bores me to death. You can go, and say I'm ill. I say, Leonard, come back, and don't look so cross. I'll look in on you in the smoking-room before I go out. I have something to tell you—no, not now—later on. Ring the bell, there's a dear, and leave me alone."

He heard her rustling down the staircase half an hour later, he heard her greeting to Mrs. Sharpe in the hall, and her quick "wait for me in the morning-room one minute, dear," and then she turned the handle of his own den and entered.

She looked pretty and distinguished, and a little flushed. With a shyness new to them both she came and kissed him, and holding on to the lappels of his coat, she said, faintly, with nervous lips:

"Dr. Bell came in yesterday, Leonard, and he said that I—that I—I mean I thought you would like to know—that you would be glad, dear."

Leonard Standish sprang to his feet. "Why, darling," he cried, "do you mean——?"

She broke from him, crimson, and breathless.

"Oh don't, Leonard, don't, you know quite well what I mean. Now I shall be late if I don't go—and you've knocked my hat crooked." She laughed nervously, and rushed from the room.

The man sat down before his writing-table, and his lips twitched. Her few shy words had changed the whole world, and the little annoyances of the last month vanished. He thought that he would go and see Lady Jane, and as his wife did not intend returning till dinner time, he telegraphed to Lady Jane to know if he might lunch with her, and received an answer in the affirmative.

The day wore on, and a hot sun streamed into her cosy drawing-room and shone on her serene features, and on his happy careless face. It shone on Mrs. Standish during her drive down to Hurlingham, and watched her relentlessly when once there. The timid Australian wife tried to hide her large figure behind the slim girl. Bernard Chitty bent his ironical face close to Mrs. Standish, and whispered comments on their mutual friends, which made her laugh. Freddie, and Dottie, and Mr. Boyne gathered round her, and took her to have some champagne, and made her feel her costume was a success. Her laughter grew noisy, her speech more careless. They suggested a dinner at Hurlingham, and a music hall to follow, which necessitated no change of dress, and then supper in a private room at the Berkeley as a finish to the day. Mrs. Standish assented to it all, and rather late in the afternoon remembered her husband and sent him a wire.

He was in the dining-room when it came, fuming inwardly, and eating an over-cooked dinner. He read that she was staying at Hurlingham to dine, and was somewhat appeased. But it somehow seemed a bad ending to the day, which had been a happy one for him.

He drove down to one of the theatres after dinner, and met Franklin in the lobby.

"What have you been doing?" he asked carelessly, as they both turned towards the stalls.

"Oh! I went to Hurlingham. Rather good match on. I saw your wife there."

"Yes, she has stayed to dine."

"Oh!" Franklin looked at him curiously.

They separated with a careless "see you later," and Leonard sat through the play.

In coming out into the Strand he saw a woman in rags, emerging from the door of a public house, and he stopped in the act of getting into his hansom to throw her half-a-crown. The baby she clutched to her breast had attracted his notice, but he felt half ashamed of the deed.

When he returned, he learnt to his surprise that his wife had not yet come home. He changed his coat for a smoking-jacket and lit a cigar.

Twelve o'clock struck, and he hummed an air from the piece he had seen, and opened some letters on the writing-table. His wife's tobacco bill was nearly as large as his own; he flung it down with an oath, and settled himself in an armchair.

One o'clock struck, and he felt uneasy, and wandered in an aimless manner all over the house. Then he returned, and flinging himself into the chair again, fell asleep.

He woke with a start; some one fell over something in the hall and roused him. He went quickly from the room. The clock faced him, it was three o'clock.

"Why, Aimée!" he said, "how late you are."

She didn't answer. She stood leaning against the hall table, with her eyes on the ground.

"Aimée," he repeated, "what's the matter?"

She raised her face.

"Noth—in," she replied.

He recoiled and turned sick with horror.

"Charming evening—so tired—go sh—sleep—all right."

His face had turned to the colour of chalk. He went up to her and took her arm.

"Come along to bed," he said, almost roughly.

She shook his hand off and laughed.

The man felt afraid of his own disgust.

She seemed to pull herself together suddenly.

"Come 'long, Leonard, bed-time," she said, and made a lurch towards the stairs.

He offered her his arm, she clutched it, and together they ascended, slowly. He helped her to undress, and put her to bed. He woke later from a troubled sleep, with the sun streaming into the room, to find her crying weakly. He took her into his arms, and she laid her cheek against his. The misery of that bright morning remained with him to the end of his days. Neither put the horror into words, they only clung to each other like two shipwrecked people, and through such misery and degradation their marriage tie seemed sanctified.

After that, in a furtive manner, he tried to stop her taking spirits, and she, in a furtive manner also, resented the fact, and defied him.

He never went near Lady Jane again; the misery he bore was all his own, and had to be suffered alone.

Almost imperceptibly his wife changed; she lost her sense of what was refined and pure, and her coarse jokes went the round of the clubs. She started card-parties, aud resumed her interest in racing. She took no care of her health, and was recklessly defiant of his wishes. This state of things lasted till the end of July, when they had settled to go north.

Mrs. Bentley Cardross, Mrs. Sharpe and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Boyne, Colonel Ashby, Franklin, and the Chittys, were to be of the party. The house in Yorkshire was put in readiness for the twelfth, and Captain Cardross asked leave to bring two men friends to join them for the shooting. Leonard Standish looked forward to the moors and the out-of-doors existence with relief. His wife admitted that she felt dreadfully tired and ill, and would be glad of the rest. He felt more hopeful once away from London, and the familiar house and park seemed to welcome him home.

The Australian woman went out shooting, and became a general favourite. Her freckled face, brown eyes, and short auburn curls, were considered almost attractive. She had a brusque manner, a large heart, and the dignity of a savage queen. Her husband neglected her shamefully, but she did not appear to notice it, and most of the women were a little

afraid of her purity of thought. They could not speak so openly in her presence.

Colonel Ashby was making a pitiable figure of himself while dancing attendance on Mrs. Sharpe. Mrs. Boyne flirted with Captain Cardross, and, as Aimée said, "She had found a nice old man for dear Mamma." Mrs. Bentley Cardross was, as usual, frivolous and undignified, and always smelt of sherry. She was terrified of her daughter, who bullied her; she managed to be a great nuisance to her son-in-law.

Meanwhile Leonard's affection for his wife had in no wise abated. Her weakness needed all the more pitying protection, and all that was best in the man seemed to come out during those few months. Where he had been careless and selfish, as men are trained to be from mere babyhood, he grew considerate and kind. He shielded her, as if she had been a rebellious child, from the consequences of her own misdeeds. Franklin swore under his breath, and marvelled; the other men thought him a fool.

Then things went from bad to worse suddenly, and he determined to speak to her, as he had never spoken to any woman in his life.

She was lying on a sofa in her boudoir, resting, and smoking one of his cigars. He went in, feeling all that he had to face, and his voice would not sound clear and natural.

"Oh, it's you, is it, Leonard?" she said. "Do shut that door. Damn the draught, it's blown this ash all over my teagown. What do you want?"

"I want to speak to you, darling. It's awfully hard, and I feel a brute—you can't tell what a brute I feel—but I know I shall be to blame if I don't get it over. I say, Aimée, I wish you would be more careful than you are."

She flushed crimson, and she trembled so much that she dropped the cigar; he knelt to pick it up, and remained on the ground beside her couch.

"You won't mind, darling, will you?" he pleaded. "I know it isn't your fault. There are some things your mother didn't teach you—perhaps she couldn't. I'm not a bit angry; I'm only sorry, and I want to help you. Won't you let me, dear?"

Her face went white under the rouge, and her eyelids dropped.

"Make it easy for me, darling, because you know what I mean. Let us aid each other. I don't blame you one bit—I only want you to trust me to help you—let us fight this thing together, and conquer it. Do let's try, darling for both our sakes."

She raised herself on one elbow.

"I don't know what you mean," she said, defiantly.

He gave a cry which might have touched her, for it wrung his own heart, and he answered hurriedly,

"I don't want you to take so much champagne. Oh, why did you force me to say it—why did you?"

She burst into tears, and fell back, and wound her arm round his neck, and every word of her defence made him wince as if with shame.

"I know," she cried, "don't speak of it, pet. It is wrong and stupid of me, of course. I get so tired—and overstrung—and so faint. I won't do it again, I promise you. I will let you help me—I will be very good. Only you know, Leonard, it isn't my fault—I am really ill and—I need something."

He gathered her in his arms, and, in an agony which she never understood, he said, tenderly,

"Don't let us talk of it again. I know you don't mean it—I believe in you, dear. And we—we will fight it together. Oh, my darling, for the sake of the little child God is going to give us, try—let us both try—to be brave, and conquer it."

She held his head against her breast, as if it gave her strength, and she cried in short gasps, terrible to hear.

The afternoon sun waned, and shed a dim light over them both, as they clasped each other close, and whispered in soft abrupt murmurs, with hearts full of tender anguish, of the child which was to come.

III

Leonard Standish sat alone in his room. The snow lay thick on the ground, and the trees were white with frost. There was an awning over the steps of a house at the other side of the square, where the occupants were preparing to give a dance, and a barrel-organ started a well-known music-hall air somewhere at the end of the street. Upstairs a child cried faintly, and was hushed again. In his own room the fire burned brightly, and the scent of cigar-smoke was heavy in the warm curtains. He sat brooding alone, and not even the thought of his little son had power to console him.

Aimée was out, she had gone out against his wishes, she disregarded them in everything now, and the house felt lonely.

It was nearly a year since his wedding day, nearly a year since he had gone to ask Lady Jane those questions. He had shirked seeing her of late; her gray eyes had a trick of reading the truth, and he had now something to hide.

His boyish face was changing; his very manner had become troubled and restless; he had lost control somehow in his own house, and the fact continually fretted him and worried him.

He thought perhaps it would be best if he went away for a little time; and then the child above began to cry again. He rose impatiently and flung away his cigar; then he went upstairs and knocked at the nursery door.

"I may come in, nurse, mayn't I?" he said.

"Why, of course, sir."

He stepped into the room, and the woman stopped in her walk, and held up his child.

"There 's Papa, duckie," she cried. "Look at Papa."

He would have felt a fool if his wife or anyone else had been there; as it was, the tiny red face, and the minute fingers clutching his own, made his throat feel dry, and his voice shake.

"I say, you're an awfully rum little thing," he remarked.

The baby, dimpled and blue-eyed, began to laugh; the nurse made it dance till its father's head felt giddy, and ashamed, but comforted in a strange inexplicable way, he crept out of the nursery and drove away to his club.

When he returned from the club half an hour before dinner, he found his wife in her room, with the child on the bed.

"Well, Aimée," he cried briskly, "did you have a nice afternoon?"

"Yes—all right. I say, Leonard." She turned a radiant face from the glass. "Isn't he a darling?"

The child somehow always drew them nearer. She went to the pillow and bent over it, with a face that was softened and beautiful. Her husband drew near, too.

"He is a nice little chap," he admitted.

"I adore him," she cried, burying her lips in the baby's soft cheek. "There never was such a baby in all the world. I think I should die if we lost him."

"He 's not ill, is he?"

"No, you idiot, quite well and healthy. Aren't you, my angel? Leonard, you have got to kiss him, too."

He put his arm round his wife and drew her near him, first. She pushed him laughingly away. His face flushed.

She had been kissing her baby with a breath that was perfumed with brandy. The discovery turned him sick.

"Embrace your son," she cried.

"I—I think I'll take him back to the nursery," he stammered. "I shan't drop him, you know. And if you don't get on with your dressing, you'll be late for dinner. You—you don't mind, do you, darling?"

"Oh, no. I can't bother with him any more. Take him to nurse, and then go and get dressed yourself. The Chittys are coming, and I wired to ask Mr. Franklin, so do be ready in good time."

"I didn't know you had asked anyone," Leonard said, slightly annoyed, and then, with a quick suspicion of more to follow, he added, "That 's all, I hope?"

"No, Mrs. Sharpe and Freddie may look in after dinner. Freddie was going to dine with her to-night."

"But I thought I told you, Aimée,"—he tried his hardest to keep calm,—"that I wouldn't have that man in the house. I am weary of him and his whole set, and I begin to believe Bernard is as bad as the rest—anyhow, I draw the line at Williams, do you hear?"

"I have no time to waste now, Leonard, and the Chittys will be here in a quarter of an hour. Do go and dress. We can discuss these things afterwards."

"Aimée,——" her husband began, and then he stopped and carried the child from the room.

He dressed hurriedly, with a nervous sense of trouble to come. She, on the contrary, drew out her diamonds at her leisure, and aided her maid to arrange some stars in her hair.

The scent of the dinner reached Leonard, and the front-door bell rang. He seized a handkerchief and stuffed it up his cuff, while he ran downstairs, Franklin met him at the drawing-room door.

"Glad to see you, Franklin," he cried. "Come in. My wife will be down in a minute."

His face had a queer, drawn look, and his lips were curiously white.

"Cold knocked you up?" asked his friend.

"No. Beastly day, isn't it? Boyne seemed in a nice fix. Blend wouldn't lend him any more. I never knew before that the wife had the money."

"Oh, he has quite a decent amount of his own."

There was a pause.

"What rotten cigars those were that Arthur gave us the other night. Did you try them?"

"I never smoke Arthur's cigars."

Mrs. Standish came into the room, and Franklin rose.

"How are you?" She looked her best, and her husband recognized her

beauty with a stab of pain. "So glad you could come, Mr. Franklin. I knew you wouldn't mind a wire in a hurry. I only discovered the Chittys were disengaged this morning. Leonard, just fasten this bracelet for me."

She peeped at her reflection in a mirror over the fireplace. "Do you like this frock, Mr. Franklin? It 's new."

He smiled. "I'm not much of a judge," he answered. "You always look charming."

"Tiresome man, when I put it on just for you." She sat down near him, and the astute Franklin thought, "She wants to conciliate me for some reason; must have had a row with her husband, that would account for his face—poor devil!"

Just at that moment the Chittys arrived, and dinner being announced at the same time, they all went downstairs.

Leonard was unusually silent, the Australian unusually grave. In contrast with these two, Franklin was witty and amusing, Bernard malicious and ironical, Aimée recklessly gay.

Leonard, when he did speak, talked at random; the coming inevitable contest with his wife occupied all his thoughts. Thus it was that, coming out of his abstraction, he caught himself studying Bernard Chitty as if he saw him for the first time, and noted the man's black hair, keen dark eyes, and cruel mouth, with a start of surprise. He had a curiously sleek personality, and a tongue whose utterances cut like a knife. Franklin's expression was that of a man of the world, and therefore boasted no taint of innocence, but it was fresh and honest beside his, and to this man Aimée bent her pretty head and listened and laughed, while she drank her champagne as if it had been water, and flashed a look of defiance at her husband.

The Australian lifted an olive in her large fingers, and held it up to the light.

"The right kind," she remarked carelessly, "the Italian curved stone. I dislike those large Spanish things saturated with oil. What is this," she drawled for a moment, "what is this about our going to the Covent Garden Ball? Are you thinking of it, Mr. Standish?"

"Certainly not," answered Leonard, promptly, when his wife interposed.

"Oh, yes, you are," she said; "I forgot to tell you, Leonard. Ada wants me to make one of her party. Are you invited, Mr. Franklin?"

There was an uncomfortable pause, then Franklin answered slowly:

"I have not that good fortune."

"Oh, but Aimée," her husband said, "I don't think you can go. I hate

that sort of thing. I know people do it now, but unless I took you myself, I shouldn't care about it for you."

She turned an expressionless face in his direction.

"Ask for some Benedictine, please, Leonard," she said; "I can't eat this sweet without some liqueur. I forgot you prefer Crême de Menthe, don't you, Mrs. Chitty?"

"No, thank you. Neither for me."

"We will stay down here and smoke," Aimée, continued. "Bernard, I have some mild cigars which you must persuade your wife to try. Freddie was telling me to-day that Reggie Graham is Dolly Marker's latest edition, is it true?"

Franklin smiled. "Graham is always being some one's latest edition," he said, "I should say there will be no impression left to print, soon."

"What relation is he—give me a light, Bernard—what relation to Lady Jane Graham?"

"None at all," said Leonard sharply.

"Oh, really, I am surprised! I always thought he was her cousin. Mrs. Chitty, my husband has been so dreadfully dull all dinner time, that I am sure you must have had a very stupid evening, I'm so sorry."

The Australian looked her straight in the face. "Mr. Standish never bores me," she said; "I may have seemed uninteresting to him."

Leonard flushed crimson, and turned to answer her in a low, troubled voice. Franklin intended to say something and refrained. Mrs. Standish was pouring brandy into her coffee with an unsteady hand.

When the ladies had left them, the men lingered for a few minutes, and then followed upstairs. Mrs. Sharpe was standing near the fire, warming a shapely foot. Freddie Williams had taken his place at the piano, and was warbling a ditty of illicit love. Aimée lolled in an armchair, the Australian bolt upright on a distant sofa, with a white face, and the lamplight full on her pretty hair. Franklin took a seat beside her, and for a time it seemed as if they were merely spectators of a play.

The ballad finished, Freddie discoursed of a new French novel, called "M. le Mari," and Aimée laughed at his description, immoderately. Mrs. Sharpe took Leonard aside to tease him into consenting to the proposed party for the ball, and Bernard sat silently intent on Mrs. Standish and her laughter.

Franklin left early, pleading another engagement. Freddie found a footstool and placed it at Aimée's feet, where he sat for the whole of the evening. The rest gathered round, and the conversation grew sultry.

Leonard talked to Mrs. Chitty at random, and she answered composedly, with no pity for the tragedy she guessed at, and no interest, merely a forced smile, and impassive manner.

At length the evening came to an end, and the husband and wife were alone. She hurried up to him with an excited laugh, and said thickly :

" What the devil made you so damned glum all the evening? Do you want all the world to know that you are in a beastly temper?"

" We will talk of this another time," he answered.

" No, we won't. I want to speak of it now. What do you mean?"

" I mean that you are tired and excited. We will return to this in the morning."

She went to the spirit stand and poured out a glass of water from a jug near. She drank it slowly, and then returned to the fire. Her manner was suddenly more composed.

" We'll have it out now, please, Leonard," she said. " I mean to ask anyone I like here."

" And I forbid you to ask Williams into the house again ; nor do I intend that you shall see so much of Mrs. Sharpe. I dislike her and all her set."

" Her set!" she mimicked him. " Does that include the Chittys?"

" Yes, it does."

There was a dangerous light in her eyes.

" You disapprove of Bernard, for that wife of his can't count."

" I disapprove, and refuse to give countenance to your flirtation with him—yes. I have been stupidly blind for a long time, but I'll be blind no more. Mrs. Sharpe has circulated her nasty stories for the last time here. Williams has sung his beastly songs for the last time in my house, and I won't have Chitty hanging about you. You will please give in to my wishes, for I can't stand it, and I won't, Aimée, any more."

The servants had gone to bed, and the house was so quiet that they could hear the tick of the hall clock downstairs. The brilliantly lighted room showed Leonard Standish pacing it with a white face and rigid lips, and the light shone on his wife's pink cheeks and brilliant eyes as she lay back in the armchair and clenched her little fists.

" It's not the first time I've spoken. I asked you to give up Ada long ago." He went as far as the door and back again, his troubled eyes in little keeping with the firmness of his mouth. " I suppose you'll say I've lost my temper," he continued. " I daresay I have. But it's the first time I've lost it with you, anyway."

She was thinking deeply, and barely noticed that he spoke.

"I don't want to be horrid to you, Aimée, but you made me mad to-night, and I know that if I don't insist on being obeyed now, my weakness will be criminal. I want to help you, not to ruin you, as so many men do their wives, by foolish complaisance. You must get out of this beastly set, and get out of it at once."

He drew aside the window curtains and looked out at the night. The moon shone on the snow, and changed even the London square into something almost poetical and beautiful. He turned back again.

"I ought to have been more careful of you," he said. "We should have begun better. I don't blame you wholly, it was my fault too. Aimée—Aimée, have you nothing to say?"

She rose with a set face, and went towards the door. He sprang forward and caught her arm.

"Come back, child. Don't go away like this, surely you know that finding fault with you nearly breaks my heart. Aimée, darling, do listen to me. I'm stupid at explaining things, I know, but I'll try, if you'll be patient, and I'm sure you'll see it's right to do what I want, in the end."

"Look here, Leonard," she said, slowly, "you are a fool to waste your breath. Your suspicions of Bernard insult me, just as your suspicions of the rest insult my friends. I don't want to talk about it any more, I'm going to bed."

He drew back, as if he had been struck; her face, hardened and white, looked at his own. She went back to the table, and poured out some brandy, which she carried upstairs in her hand.

He followed a few minutes later, and found she had locked the door.

The night seemed long, and the dawn came slowly. He lay on the smoking-room sofa and tried to think, but consecutive thought would not come. Directly the servants were astir, he changed his clothes, and went and had a Turkish bath. He felt half afraid to go home.

IV

Mrs. Standish was out, his man told him when he returned home, and he seemed wishful to add to the fact, or at least to be questioned on the subject, but Leonard passed him, and went upstairs. He met her maid coming down.

Mrs. Standish had gone to spend the evening with Mrs. Sharpe, and had given her leave to go out.

Leonard nodded, with no sign of surprise, and changed his clothes for a smoking suit.

Before going down to dinner, he peeped in at the nursery. The boy lay sleeping peacefully in his little crib, with one small fist buried in his cheek.

Mrs. Standish had come in and kissed him before she went out, the nurse said, and might have added, how she had cried, but did not dare.

He found some paper and scribbled a hasty note in pencil, begging her not to give people a chance to talk, and asking her to return for their child's sake. He sent it round to Mrs. Sharpe's by his own man, and told him to wait if needful till they returned home from the theatre (should they be out), and not to come back without an answer.

Then he took a cigar and strolled into the smoking-room, where he read for some time.

To do so needed some self-control, as he was miserably restless.

Eleven struck. He threw the paper away, and sat down at his writing table. He wrote half-a-dozen notes which had been neglected, and then idly began tracing patterns on the blotting pad. The phantoms had returned, the air of Freddie's latest song rang in his ears, and he remembered with a start another evening when he had waited for her, and she had come back from Hurlingham—as she had often done since.

Twelve, and his man at last.

"Mrs. Sharpe gave me this note, sir. She had been at the theatre. I waited till she came in, as you told me."

"And your mistress?"

"I didn't see her, sir. Is that all, sir?"

"Yes, you can go to bed."

He hurriedly tore open the envelope. His own, unopened, fell out. On an added piece of paper, in Ada Sharpe's bold handwriting, were the words.

"DEAR MR. STANDISH,

"Aimée isn't here. There must be some mistake. I haven't seen her since last night. I hope there is nothing wrong.

"Sincerely yours,

"ADA SHARPE."

He turned so sick at heart, that for a time he sat like a statue, with no movement, and no colour in his face; he scarcely thought.

Then, very slowly, with a foreknowledge of what he was to find there, he went up to her room.

It lay on the dressing table, the white sheet of paper telling him that she had gone. With a cry of agony, he flung himself on the bed which they had shared, and buried his face in the pillows.

And the child started crying in the room above as if it knew that its little life was desolate indeed.

* * * * * * *

The next morning found Leonard standing outside the Chittys' door. He was told that Mrs. Chitty would see him, and he went upstairs. They were in curious contrast, he so pale and shaken, she so calm and unmoved.

"I suppose you—you've heard," he said.

"Yes."

"I came to ask you if I can be of any use?"

"No thank you—none."

He looked at her brown eyes, with their womanly softness, and marvelled.

"I suppose you will institute proceedings for a divorce," he said.

The room was manly, like herself, and devoid of any useless luxury. She rose and went towards the fireplace, and her neat dress showed her superb figure to good advantage.

"The truth is, Mr. Standish," she said, "we are companions merely in misfortune, and I think we are better apart. You are powerless to aid me, and I—I regret it—am powerless to comfort you. You will probably get a divorce—it is the only thing for you to do—but I shall not."

"Not!" he stammered.

She smiled, and he realized that there was something more powerful in that smile than in any other expression of her face.

"You may as well have the facts. Bernard has a hundred a year of his own. The rest of the money is mine. Had your wife any money?"

"None—but her settlements."

"I thought so. Well, in a short time I expect him home."

"But you can't mean that you will receive him?"

The Australian laughed. "Not exactly with open arms, Mr. Standish, but I shall receive him all the same. I have no relations in Australia, and no real friends in England. I have no choice. But I don't appeal to your pity," she added quickly, "I appeal to no one's pity."

Leonard rose.

"I suppose you think my visit an intrusion, Mrs. Chitty?" he said.

The light fell full on his boyish face, altered and drawn with misery. The Australian flushed crimson, and said in a voice that was full of a woman's caressing tenderness :

"You are one of those men who should never have had this to bear. I believe you would be good to a woman, and patient with her. I thought you weak, but I fancy you were only blind. Will you shake hands and say you forgive me?"

He did not quite understand, but he knew there was something quaintly motherly in her action which amused him while it touched him.

"Of course, I'll shake hands," he said. "And if you ever happen to want aid in any little way, you'll send for me, won't you?"

She hesitated, and then she said :

"Yes, if I ever do, I will. Good-bye."

Leonard found there was a lady waiting to see him when he got home. The day reminded him of the time after the funeral of his mother, years ago. It was crowded with events, and yet none of them mattered.

He went upstairs like a man who was very weary, and pushed open the drawing-room door.

Lady Jane came towards him with outstretched hands.

"Leonard, my poor boy!" she said.

The words arrested him, and he felt a queer choking sensation in his throat.

"I say—don't—don't make me be a fool," he cried, "don't, please."

She drew back, and put a handkerchief to her lips.

"I can't forgive myself," she said. "Oh, if only I hadn't been such a coward. How you must hate me."

He stared at her, with a curious smile touching his lips.

"What on earth do you mean?"

"That day when you came to me, oh, if only I had spoken out!"

"Then you *did* know something," he said.

"I knew nothing for certain, but I had heard rumours, yes. Oh, Leonard, what must you think? And I might have saved you all this."

The smile deepened.

"My dear Lady Jane, it really doesn't matter; nothing matters now. How did you hear about—her?"

"Mr. Franklin came round this morning. It seems Mr. Leighton met them at the station—he was seeing some friends off by the same train. I hardly know Mr. Franklin, but he seemed much worried over the whole thing,

and begged me to come and see you. He said, a man felt such a useless brute at such a time."

"That's so like Franklin," Leonard said. "He's one of the best chaps I know."

"We were going down to Folkestone to-morrow, I have taken a house there——"

He interrupted: "I forgot you had been ill. Are you better?"

"Oh, yes, thank you. But I want—and Harold wants—you to come to us. It will make me feel you forgive me, and we shall be quite quiet down there. It—it would be good for you to get away from London, and good for the child."

He started, and then laid his head down on his elbow on the mantelpiece.

"I will take great care of him, Leonard. Although I've never had a child, I know how to manage them well. You can trust him to my care."

He didn't answer.

"Any business you have to arrange can be done down there. We can talk it over together, we three."

He looked up suddenly.

"I—I am such a coward of the future," he said.

"Did you sleep last night?"

"No—nor the night before."

"I thought not. Now I'm going to take possession of you. Ring that bell near you, and give orders that the nurse is to be ready to go home with me in an hour—you must sleep in my house to-night."

"There is so much to do."

"Leave it to others. I insist on your giving in to me. Will you be with us by dinner-time?"

"Yes, anything you like."

By-and-by he left her, and crept away upstairs, and shut himself into the bedroom.

The house was to be let, and he intended to leave his man behind to arrange everything. It seemed years since last night.

He pulled open the drawers, the masses of white under-linen, sweetly scented, met his view. He seized them in his arms, and bundled them into a large trunk. Then he went on to the gloves and handkerchiefs, the dainty silk petticoats, and the tiny boots and shoes. He came to the wardrobe in its turn, and fingered the soft dresses with a tender touch. In this, she had gone to the Paris races a year ago; in this, she had driven beside him on the Yorkshire

moors ; and, lastly, he came upon a box full of sheeny satin, and his hands shook as he lifted it—her pretty wedding dress, with its trimming of old lace —and laid it among the others in the trunk.

He pulled a second box forward, and commenced filling that. The writing-table, a dainty Louis Quinze table, a wedding present, he came to in time. He broke it open, and carried the drawer full of papers to the fire he had caused to be lighted an hour before. In piling the letters on to the flames, he caught sight of one in Bernard's writing, and swore. He cursed himself for a fool, and rescued the rest. These might be useful in an action for divorce.

There were fourteen in all. He put them into a large envelope, and sealed it.

The day wore on. A few hours later he emerged, gave some orders, had his own portmanteau placed on a hansom, and drove away.

He entered Lady Jane's drawing-room, and greeted Harold, as he had entered and greeted them all his life.

There was no difference in him at dinner. He asked once after their young niece, May Egerton, and added, that she was the prettiest girl he had ever known ; and turned crimson when he had said it, remembering whom he had admired more. He affected not to notice that Lady Jane's eyes were miserably red, or that her manner, in her keen self-reproach, had changed towards himself. Left alone with her husband, the few short words on the subject they exchanged merely put discussion off till another time. He met the nurse in leaving the dining-room, and asked her carelessly if the child was all right.

" Yes, sir," she faltered, in her timid pity for him. " He's sleeping beautiful. I'm just going down to have my supper, sir."

" Thank you," he said, abruptly, and went upstairs.

" Where's Leonard ? " asked Lady Jane, as her husband entered the drawing-room alone.

" He's gone upstairs—I fancy, to see the boy. And I hope to God it will thoroughly upset him. The man's calm may be natural, but it's horrid to watch."

Lady Jane put her head down on her hands.

" Don't, don't," her husband pleaded, " he has the kid, you know, after all."

And he said it as only a childless man could have said it, as his weeping wife knew.

A New Writer.

my wife in
Aug. 1895.
Albert E. Sterner.

SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE

1887-1895

THROUGH the green boughs, I hardly saw thy face
They twined so close ; the sun was in mine eyes ;
And now the sullen trees in sombre lace,
Stand bare beneath the sinister, sad skies.

O sun and summer ! Say, in what far night,
The gold and green, the glory of thine head,
Of bough and branch have fallen ? O, the white,
Gaunt ghosts that flutter where thy feet have sped,

Across the terrace, that is desolate,
But rang then with thy laughter : ghost of thee,
That holds its shroud up with most delicate
Dead fingers ; and, behind, the ghost of me,

Tripping fantastic with a mouth that jeers
At roseal flowers of youth, the turbid streams
Toss in derision down the barren years
To Death, the Host of all our golden dreams.

ERNEST DOWSON.

ROSA ALCHEMICA

I

A FEW years ago an extraordinary religious frenzy took hold upon the peasantry of a remote Connemara headland; and a number of eccentric men and women, who had turned an old custom-house into a kind of college, were surprised at prayer, as it was then believed, by a mob of fishermen, stone masons, and small farmers, and beaten to death with stones, which were heaped up close at hand to be ready for the next breach in the wave-battered pier. Vague rumours of pagan ceremonies and mysterious idolatries had for some time drifted among the cabins; and the indignation of the ignorant had been further inflamed by a priest, unfrocked for drunkenness, who had preached at the road-side of the secret coming of the Antichrist. I first heard of these unfortunates, on whom the passion for universal ideas, which distinguishes the Celtic and Latin races, was to bring so dreadful a martyrdom, but a few weeks before the end; and the change in my opinions which has made my writings so much less popular and intelligible, and driven me to the verge of taking the habit of St. Dominic, was brought about by the strange experiences I endured in their presence.

I had just published "Rosa Alchemica," a little work on the alchemists, somewhat in the manner of Sir Thomas Browne, and had received many letters from believers in the arcane sciences, upbraiding what they called my timidity, for they could not believe so evident sympathy but the sympathy of the artist, which is half pity, for everything which has moved men's hearts in any age. I had discovered, early in my researches, that their doctrine was no merely chemical phantasy but a philosophy they applied to the world, to the elements, and to man himself; and that they sought to fashion gold out of common metals merely as part of an universal transmutation of all things into some divine and imperishable substance; and this enabled me to make my little book a fanciful reverie over the transmutation of life into art, and a cry of measureless desire for a world made wholly of essences.

I was sitting, dreaming of what I had written, in my house in one of the old parts of Dublin, a house my ancestors had made almost famous through

their part in the politics of the city, and their friendships with the famous men of their generations; and was feeling an unwonted happiness at having at last accomplished a long cherished design, and made my rooms an expression of this favourite doctrine. The portraits, of more historical than artistic interest, had gone; and old Flemish tapestry, full of the blue and bronze of peacocks, fell over the doors, and shut out all common history and all unbeautiful activity; and now, I repeated to myself, when I looked at my Crivelli, and pondered on the rose in the hand of the Virgin, wherein the form was so delicate and precise that it seemed more like a thought than a flower, or at the gray dawn and rapturous faces of my Francesca, I knew all a Christian's ecstasy without his slavery to rule and custom; when I pondered over the antique bronze gods and goddesses, which I had mortgaged my house to buy, I had all a pagan's delight in various beauty, and without his terror at sleepless destiny, and his labour with many sacrifices: and I had only to go to my book-shelf, where every book was bound in leather, stamped with intricate ornament, and of a carefully chosen colour; Shakespeare in the orange of the glory of the world, Dante in the dull red of his anger, Milton in the blue-gray of his formal calm; and I could experience what I would of human passions without their bitterness and without satiety. I had gathered about me all gods because I believed in none, and experienced every pleasure because I gave myself to none, but held myself apart, individual, indissoluble, a mirror of polished steel. I looked in the triumph of this imagination at the birds of Hera, glowing in the firelight as though they were wrought of jewels; and to my mind, for which symbolism was a necessity, they seemed the door-keepers of my world, shutting out all that was not of as affluent a beauty as their own; and for a moment I thought as I had thought in so many other moments, that it was possible to rob life of every bitterness except the bitterness of death; and then a thought which had followed this thought, time after time, filled me with a passionate sorrow. All those forms; that Madonna with her brooding purity, those rapturous faces singing in the morning light, those bronze divinities with their passionless dignity, those wild shapes rushing from despair to despair; belonged to a divine world wherein I had no part; and every experience, however profound, every perception, however exquisite, would bring me the bitter dream of a limitless energy I could never know; and even in my most perfect moment I would be two selves, the one watching with heavy eyes the other's moment of content. I had heaped about me the gold born on the crucibles of others, but the supreme dream of the alchemists, the transmutation of the weary heart

into a weariless spirit, was as far from me as, I doubted not, it had been from them also. I turned to my last purchase, a set of alchemical apparatus, which, the dealer in the Rue le Peletier had assured me, once belonged to Raymond Lully, and, as I joined the *alembic* to the *athanor*, and laid the *lavacrum maræ* at their side, I understood the alchemical doctrine, that all beings, divided from the great deep, where the spirits wander one and yet a multitude, are weary; and sympathized, in the pride of my connoisseurship, with the consuming thirst for destruction which made the alchemists veil under his symbols of lions and dragons, of eagles and ravens, of dew and of nitre, a search for an essence which would dissolve all mortal things. I repeated to myself the ninth key of Basilius Valentinus, in which he compares the fire of the last day to the fire of an alchemist, and the world to an alchemist's furnace, and would have us know that all must be dissolved before the divine substance, material gold or immaterial ecstasy, awake. I had dissolved indeed the mortal world, and lived amid immortal essences, but had obtained no miraculous ecstasy. As I thought of these things, I drew aside the curtains and looked out into the darkness, and it seemed to my troubled fancy that all those little points of light filling the sky were the furnaces of innumerable divine alchemists, who labour continually, turning lead into gold, weariness into ecstasy, bodies into souls, the darkness into God; and at their perfect labour, my mortality grew heavy, and I cried out, as so many dreamers and men of letters in our age have cried, for the birth of that elaborate spiritual beauty which could alone uplift souls weighted with so many dreams.

II

My reverie was broken by a loud knocking at the door, and I wondered the more at this because I had no visitors, and had bid my servants to do all things silently, lest they broke the dream of my inner life. Feeling a little curious, I resolved to go to the door myself, and, taking one of the silver candlesticks from the mantelpiece, began to descend the stairs. The servants appeared to be out, for though the sound poured through every corner and crevice of the house, there was no stir in the lower rooms. I remembered that my needs were so few, my part in life so little, that they had begun to come and go as they would, often leaving me alone for hours. The emptiness and silence of a world, from which I had driven everything but dreams, suddenly overwhelmed me and I shuddered as I drew the bolt. I found before me Michael Robartes, whom I had not seen for years, and whose wild red hair,

fierce eyes, sensitive, tremulous lips and rough clothes, made him look now just as they used to do fifteen years before, something between a debauchee, a saint, and a peasant. He had recently come to Ireland, he said, and wished to see me on a matter of importance, indeed, the only matter of importance for him and me. His voice brought visibly before me our student years in Paris, and remembering a mesmeric power he had once possessed over me, a little fear mingled with much annoyance at this irrelevant intrusion, as I led the way up the wide staircase, where Swift had passed joking and railing, and Curran telling stories and quoting Greek in simpler days, before men's minds, subtilized and complicated by the romantic movement in art and literature, began to tremble on the verge of some unimagined revelation. I felt that my hand shook and saw that the light of the candle wavered and quivered more than it need have, upon the meanids on the old French panels, making them look like the first beings slowly shaping in the formless and void darkness. When the door had closed, and the peacock curtain, glimmering like many-coloured flame, fell between us and the world, I felt in a way I could not understand, that some singular and unexpected thing was about to happen. I went over to the mantelpiece and set the candlestick upon it, and finding that a little painted bowl from the workshop of Orazio Fontana, which I used for holding antique amulets, had fallen on its side, and poured out its contents, I lingered partly to collect my thoughts, and partly to gather the amulets into the bowl with that habitual reverence which seemed to me the due of things so long connected with secret hopes and terrors. When I turned I saw Robartes standing in the middle of the room and looking straight before him as though he saw some one or something I could not, and whispering to himself. He heard me move, and coming toward the fire, sat down and began gazing at the flame. I turned my chair towards him and sat down also and waited for him to speak. He watched the rising and falling of the flame for a moment and began.

"I have come to ask you that question which I asked you in the Café de la Paix, and which you left Paris rather than answer."

He had turned his eyes towards me and I saw them glitter in the firelight as I replied:

"You mean, will I become an initiate of your Order of the Alchemical Rose? I would not consent in Paris, when I was full of unsatisfied desire and now that I have at last fashioned my life according to my desire, am I likely to consent?"

"You have changed greatly since then," he answered. "I have read your books, and now I see you among all these images, and I understand you

better than you do yourself, for I have been with many and many dreamers at the same cross ways. You have shut away the world and gathered the gods about you, and if you do not throw yourself at their feet, you will be always full of lassitude and of wavering purpose ; for a man must forget he is miserable in the bustle and noise of the multitude in this world and time, or seek a mystical union with the multitude who govern this world and time."

For a moment the room appeared to darken, as it used to do when he was about to perform some singular experiment, and in the darkness the peacocks upon the doors seemed to glow with a more intense colour. I cast off the illusion, which was, I believed, caused merely by memory, for I would not acknowledge that he could overcome my now mature intellect, and said :

" Even if I grant that I need a spiritual belief and some form of worship, why should I go to Eleusis, and not to Calvary ? " He leaned forward and began speaking with a slightly rhythmical intonation, and as he spoke I had to struggle again with the shadow ; as of some older night than the night of the sun ; which began to dim the light of the candles and to blot out the little gleams upon the corners of picture frames and on the bronze divinities, while it left the peacocks to glimmer and glow as though each separate colour were a living spirit. I had fallen into a profound dreamlike reverie, in which I heard him speaking as at a distance. " And yet there is no one who communes with only one god," he was saying, " and the more a man lives in imagination and in a refined understanding, the more gods does he meet with and talk with, and the more does he come under the power of Lear, and Hamlet, and Lancelot, and Faust, and Beatrice, and Quixote, divinities who took upon themselves spiritual bodies in the minds of the modern poets and romance-writers, and under the power of the old divinities, who, since the Renaissance, have won everything of their ancient worship except the sacrifice of birds and beasts and fishes, the fragrance of garlands and the smoke of incense. The many think humanity made these divinities, and that it can unmake them again ; but we who have seen them pass in rattling harness, and in soft robes, and heard them speak with articulate voices while we lay in deathlike trance, know that they are always making and unmaking humanity, which is indeed but the trembling of their lips." He had stood up and begun to walk to and fro, and had become in my waking dream a shuttle weaving an immense web whose folds had begun to fill the room. The room seemed to have become inexplicably silent, as though all but the web and the weaving were at an end in the world. " They have come to us. They have come to us," the voice began, " all that have ever been in your reverie, all

that you have met with in books. There is Lear, his beard still wet with the thunderstorm, and he laughs because you thought yourself an existence who are but a shadow, and him a shadow who is an eternal god; and there is Beatrice, with her lips half-parted in a smile, as though all the stars were about to pass away in a sigh of love; and there is the mother of that god of humility who cast so great a spell over men that they have tried to unpeople their hearts that he might reign alone, but she holds in her hand the rose whose every petal is a god; and there, O! swiftly she comes, is Aphrodite under a twilight falling from the wings of numberless sparrows, and about her feet are the gray and white doves." In the midst of my dream I saw him hold out his left arm and pass his right hand over it as though he stroked the wings of doves. I made a violent effort which seemed almost to tear me in two, and said with a forced determination, "Your philosophy is charming as a phantasy, but, carried to the point of belief, it is a supreme delusion, and, enforced by mesmeric glamour, a supreme crime. You would sweep me away into an indefinite world which fills me with terror; and yet a man is great, just in so far as he can make his mind reflect everything with indifferent precision like a mirror." I seemed to be perfectly master of myself, and went on, but more rapidly, "I command you to leave me at once, for your ideas and your phantasies are but the illusions that eat the world like maggots; they creep into civilizations when they decline, and into minds when they decay." I had grown suddenly angry, and, seizing the alembic from the table, was about to rise and fling it, when the peacocks on the door behind him appeared to grow immense; and then the alembic fell from my fingers, and I was drowned in a tide of green and bronze feathers, and as I struggled hopelessly I heard his distant voice saying, "Our master, Avicenna, has written that all life proceeds out of corruption." The glittering feathers had now covered me completely, and I knew that I had struggled for hundreds of years and was conquered at last. I was sinking into the depth when the green and bronze that seemed to fill the world became a sea of flame and swept me away, and as I was swirled along I heard a voice over my head cry, "The mirror is broken in two pieces;" and another voice answer, "The mirror is broken in four pieces," and a more distant voice cry with an exultant cry, "The mirror is broken into numberless pieces;" and then a multitude of pale hands were reaching towards me and strange gentle faces bending above me, and half-wailing and half-caressing voices uttering words that were forgotten the moment they were spoken. I was being lifted out of the tide of flame, and felt my memories, my hopes, my thoughts, my will, everything I held to be myself, melting away; then I seemed to rise through numberless companies of

beings who were, I understood, in some way more certain than thought; each wrapped in his eternal moment, in the perfect lifting of an arm, in a little circlet of rhythmical words, in dreaming with dim eyes and half-closed eyelids: And then I passed beyond these forms, which were so beautiful they had almost ceased to be, and, having endured strange moods melancholy, as it seemed, with the weight of many worlds, I passed into that Death which is Beauty herself, and into this Loneliness which all the multitudes desire without ceasing. All things that had ever lived seemed to come and dwell in my heart and I in theirs; and I had never again known mortality or tears, had I not suddenly fallen from the certainty of vision into the uncertainty of dream, and become a drop of molten gold falling with immense rapidity, through a night elaborate with stars, and all about me a melancholy exultant wailing. I fell and fell and fell, and then the wailing was but the wailing of the wind in the chimney, and I awoke to find myself leaning upon the table and supporting my head with my hands. I saw the alembic swaying from side to side in the distant corner it had rolled to, and Robartes watching me and waiting. "I will go wherever you will," I said, "and do whatever you bid me, for I have been with eternal things." "I knew you could not help yourself," he replied, "but must need answer as you have answered, when I heard the storm begin. You must come to a great distance, for we were commanded to build our temple between the pure multitude of the waves and the impure multitude of men."

III

I did not speak as we drove through the deserted streets, for my mind was curiously empty of familiar thoughts and experiences: it seemed to have been plucked out of the definite world and cast naked upon a shoreless sea. There were moments when the vision appeared on the point of returning, and I would half-remember with an ecstasy of joy or sorrow, crimes and heroisms, fortunes and misfortunes, or begin to contemplate with a sudden leaping of the heart, hopes and terrors, desires and ambitions, alien to my orderly and careful life; and then I would awake shuddering at the thought that some great imponderable being had swept through my mind. It was, indeed, days before this feeling passed perfectly away, and even now when I have sought refuge in the only definite faith, I feel a great tolerance for those people with incoherent personalities, who gather in the chapels and meeting-places of certain obscure sects, because I also have felt fixed habits and principles dissolving before a power, which was *hysterica passio*, or sheer madness, if you

will, but was so powerful in its melancholy exultation that I tremble lest it wake again and drive me from my new-found peace.

We were not long in the train before Michael Robartes was asleep, and, to my excited mind, his face, in which there was no sign of all that had so shaken me and that now kept me wakeful, was more like a mask than a face. The fancy possessed me that the man behind it had dissolved away like salt in water, and that it laughed and sighed, appealed and denounced, at the bidding of beings greater or less than man. "This is not Michael Robartes at all: Michael Robartes is dead ; dead for ten, for twenty years, perhaps," I kept repeating to myself. I fell at last into a feverish sleep, waking up from time to time when we rushed past some little town, its slated roofs shining with wet, or still lake gleaming in the cold morning light. I had been too preoccupied to ask where we were going, or to notice what tickets Michael Robartes had taken, but I knew now from the direction of the sun that we were going westward ; and presently I knew also, by the way in which the trees had grown into the semblance of tattered beggars flying with bent heads towards the east, that we were approaching the western coast. Then immediately I saw the sea between the low hills upon the right, its dull gray broken into white patches and lines.

When we left the train we had still, I found, some way to go, and set out buttoning our coats about us, for the wind was bitter and violent. Robartes was silent, seeming anxious to leave me to my thoughts ; and as we walked between the sea and the rocky side of a great promontory, I realized with a new perfection what a shock had been given to all my habits of thought and of feeling, if indeed some mysterious change had not taken place in the substance of my mind, for the gray waves, plumed with scudding foam, had grown part of a teeming, fantastic inner life, and when Robartes pointed to a square ancient-looking house, with a smaller and newer building under its lea, set out on the very end of a dilapidated and almost deserted pier, and said it was the temple of the alchemical rose, I was possessed with the phantasy that the sea, which kept covering it with showers of white foam, was claiming it as part of some indefinite and passionate life, which had begun to war upon our orderly and careful days, and was about to plunge the world into a night as obscure as that which followed the downfall of the classical world. One part of my mind mocked this phantastic terror, but the other ; the part that still lay half-plunged in vision ; listened to the clash of unknown armies, and shuddered at unimaginable fanaticisms, that hung in those gray, leaping waves.

Some half a mile to sea, and plunging its bowsprit under at every moment, and lifting it again dripping with foam, was a brown-sailed fishing yawl.

"A time will come for these people also," said Robartes, pointing towards the yawl, "and they will sacrifice a mullet to Artemis, or some other fish to some new divinity; unless, indeed, their own divinities, the Dagda with his overflowing cauldron, Lu with his spear dipped in poppy juice, lest it rush forth hot for battle, Angus with the three birds on his shoulder, Bove Derg and his red swine-herd, and all the heroic children of Dana set up once more their temples of gray stone. Their reign has never ceased, but only waned in power a little, for the *shee* still pass in every wind, and dance and play at hurley, and fight their sudden battles in every hollow and on every hill; but they cannot build their temples again till there have been martyrdoms and victories, and perhaps even that long-foretold battle in the Valley of the Black Pig."

Keeping close to the wall that went about the pier on the seaward side to escape the driving foam and the wind, which threatened every moment to lift us off our feet, we made our way in silence to the door of the square building. Robartes opened it with a key, on which I saw the rust of many salt winds, and led me along a bare passage and up an uncarpeted stair to a little room surrounded with bookshelves. A meal would be brought, but only of fruit, for I must submit to a tempered fast before the ceremony, he explained, and with it a book on the doctrine and method of the Order, over which I was to spend what remained of the winter daylight. He then left me, promising to return an hour before the ceremony. I began searching among the bookshelves, and found one of the most exhaustive alchemical libraries I have ever seen. There were the works of Morienus, who hid his immortal body under a shirt of hair-cloth; of Avicenna, who was a drunkard, and yet controlled numberless legions of spirits; of Alfarabi, who put so many spirits into his lute that he could make men laugh, or weep, or fall in deathly trance, as he would; of Lully, who transformed himself into the likeness of a red cock; of Flamell, who with his wife Parnella achieved the elixir many hundreds of years ago, and is fabled to live still in Arabia among the dervishes; and of many of a less fame. There were few mediæval or modern mystics other than the alchemical; and because, I had little doubt, of the devotion to one god of the greater number, and of the limited sense of beauty, which Robartes would hold its inevitable consequence; but I did notice a complete set of facsimiles of the prophetical writings of William Blake, and probably because of the multitude that thronged his illumination, and were, as he delights to describe them, "like the gay fishes on the waves when the moon sucks up the dew." I noted also many poets and prose-writers of every age, but only those who

were a little weary of life, as indeed the greatest have been everywhere, and who have cast their imagination to us, as a something they needed no longer now that they were going up in their fiery chariots.

Presently I heard a tap at the door, and a woman came in and laid a little fruit upon the table. I judged that she had once been handsome, but her cheeks were hollowed by what I would have held, had I seen her anywhere else, an excitement of the flesh and a thirst for pleasure, but that was, I doubted not, an excitement of the imagination and a thirst for beauty. I asked her some question concerning the ceremony, but, getting no answer except a shake of the head, saw that I must await initiation in silence. When I had eaten she came again, and having laid a curious wrought bronze box on the table, lighted the candles, and took away the plates and the remnants. So soon as I was alone, I turned to the box, and found that the peacocks of Hera spread out their tails over the sides and lid, and against a background, on which were wrought great stars as though to affirm that the heavens were a part of their glory. In the box was a book bound in vellum, and having upon the vellum, and in very delicate colours and in gold, the alchemical rose, with many spears thrusting against it, but in vain, as was shown by the shattered golden points of those nearest. The book was written upon vellum, and in beautiful clear letters interspersed with symbolical pictures and illuminations, after the manner of the *Splendor Solis*. The first chapter described how six students, of whom all but one, who was of Cornish descent, were Western Irish, Western Scottish, or French, gave themselves separately to the study of alchemy, and solved, one the mystery of the Pelican, another the mystery of the green Dragon, another the mystery of the Eagle, another that of Salt and Mercury. What seemed a procession of accidents, but was, the book declared, a contrivance of preternatural powers, brought them together in the garden of an inn in the south of France, and while they talked together the thought came to them, that alchemy was the gradual distillation of the contents of the soul until they were ready to put off the mortal and put on the immortal. An owl passed rustling among the vine-leaves overhead, and then an old woman came, leaning upon a stick, and sitting close to them took up the thought where they had dropped it. Having expounded the whole principle of spiritual alchemy, and bid them found the Order of the Alchemical Rose, she passed from among them, and when they would have followed, was nowhere to be seen. They formed themselves into an order, holding their goods and making their researches in common, and, as they became perfect in the alchemical doctrine, apparitions came and went among them, and taught

them more and more marvellous mysteries. The book then went on to expound so much of these as the neophyte was permitted to know, dealing at the outset and at considerable length with the independent reality of our thoughts, which was, it declared, the doctrine from which all true doctrines sprang. If you imagine, it said, the semblance of a living being, it is at once possessed by a wandering soul, and goes hither and thither working good or evil, until the moment of its death has come; and gave many examples received, it said, from many gods: Eros had taught them how to fashion forms in which a divine soul could dwell, and whisper what they would into sleeping ears; and Ate, forms from which demonic beings could pour madness, or unquiet dreams, into sleeping blood; and Hermes, that if you powerfully imagined a hound at your bedside, it would keep watch there until you woke, and drive away all but the mightiest demons, but that if your imagination was weakly, the hound would be weakly also, and the demons prevail, and the hound soon die; and Aphrodite, that if you imagined a dove crowned with silver, and bade it flutter over your bed, its soft cooing would make sweet dreams of immortal love gather and brood over your mortal sleep. And all divinities alike had revealed with many warnings and lamentations that all minds are continually giving birth to such beings, and sending them forth to work health or disease, joy or madness. If you would give forms to the evil powers, it went on, you were to make them ugly, thrusting out a lip, with the thirsts of Life, or breaking the proportions of a body with the burdens of Life; but the divine powers would only appear in beautiful shapes, which are but, as it were, shapes trembling out of existence, folding up into a timeless ecstasy, drifting, with half-shut eyes, into a sleepy stillness. The bodiless souls who descended into these forms were what men call the moods, and worked all great changes in the world; for just as the magician or the artist could call them when he would, so they could call out of the mind of the magician or the artist, or if they were demons, out of the mind of the mad or the ignoble, what shape they would, and through its voice and its gesture pour themselves out upon the world. In this way all great events were accomplished; a mood, a divinity or a demon, first descending like a faint sigh into men's minds, and then changing their thoughts and their actions until hair that was yellow had grown black, or hair that was black had grown yellow, or cities crumbled away and new cities arisen in their places, and empires moved their border as though they were but drifts of leaves. I remembered, as I read, that mood which Edgar Poe found in a wine-cup, and how it passed into France and took possession of Baudelaire, and from Baudelaire passed to England and the

Pre-Raphaelites, and then again returned to France, and still wanders the world, enlarging its power as it goes, awaiting the time when it shall be, perhaps, alone, or, with other moods, master over a great new religion, and an awakener of the fanatical wars that hovered in the gray surges, and forget the wine-cup where it was born. The rest of the book contained symbols of form, and sound, and colour, and their attribution to divinities and demons, so that the initiate might fashion a shape for any divinity or any demon, and be as powerful as Avicenna among those who live among the roots of tears and laughter.

IV

A couple of hours after sunset Robartes returned and told me that I would have to learn the steps of an exceedingly antique pantomimic dance, because before my initiation could be perfected I had to join three times in a magical dance; rhythm being the circle of Eternity, on which alone the transient and accidental could be broken, and the spirit set free. I found that the steps, which were simple enough, resembled certain antique Greek dances, and having been a good dancer in my youth and the master of many curious Gaelic steps, I soon had them in my memory. He then robed me and himself in a costume which suggested by its shape both Greece and Egypt, but by its crimson colour a more passionate life than theirs; and having put into my hands a little chainless censer of bronze, wrought into the likeness of a rose, by some modern craftsman, he told me to open a small door opposite to the door by which I had entered. I put my hand to the handle, but the moment I did so the fumes of the incense, helped perhaps by his mysterious glamour, made me fall again into a dream, in which I seemed to be a mask, lying on the counter of a little Eastern shop. Many persons, with eyes so bright and still that I knew them for more than human, came in and tried me on their faces, but at last flung me into a corner with a little laughter; but all this passed in a moment, for when I awoke my hand was still upon the handle. I opened the door, and found myself in a marvellous passage, along whose sides were many divinities wrought in a mosaic not less beautiful than the mosaic in the Baptistery at Ravenna, but of a less severe beauty; the predominant colour of each, which was surely symbolic, being repeated in the lamps that hung from the ceiling, a curiously-scented lamp before each divinity. I passed on, marvelling exceedingly how these enthusiasts could have created all this beauty in so remote a place, and half persuaded to believe in a material alchemy, by the sight of so

much hidden mysterious wealth, the censer filling the air, as I passed, with smoke of ever-changing colour. I stopped before a door on whose bronze panels were wrought great waves in whose shadow were faint suggestions of terrible faces. Those beyond it seemed to have heard our steps, for a voice cried : " Is the work of the Incorruptible Fire at an end ? " and immediately Robartes answered : " The perfect gold has come from the Athanor." The door swung open and we were in a great circular room, and among men and women who were dancing slowly in crimson robes. Upon the ceiling was an immense rose wrought in mosaic, and about the walls, also in mosaic, a battle of gods and angels, the gods glimmering like rubies and sapphires, and the angels of the one grayness, because, as Robartes whispered, they had renounced their divinity, and turned from the unfolding of their separate hearts, out of love for a God of humility and sorrow. Pillars supported the roof and made a kind of circular cloister, each pillar being a column of confused shapes, divinities, it seemed, of the winds, who rose as in a whirling dance of more than human vehemence, and playing upon pipes and cymbals ; and from among these shapes were thrust out hands, and in these hands were censers. I was bid place my censer also in a hand and take my place and dance, and as I turned from the pillars towards the dancers, I saw that the floor was of a green stone, and that a pale Christ on a pale cross was wrought in the midst. I asked Robartes the meaning of this, and was told that they desired " To trouble His unity with their multitudinous feet." The dance wound in and out, tracing upon the floor the shapes of petals that copied the petals in the rose overhead, and to the sound of hidden instruments, which were perhaps of an antique pattern, for I have never heard the like ; and every moment the dance was more passionate, until all the winds of the world seemed to have awakened under our feet. After a little I had grown weary, and stood by a pillar watching the coming and going of those flame-like figures ; until gradually I sank into a half dream, from which I was awakened by seeing the petals of the great rose, which had no longer the look of mosaic, falling slowly through the incense heavy air, and as they fell shaping into the likeness of living beings of an extraordinary beauty. Still faint and cloud-like, they began to dance, and as they danced took a more and more definite shape, so that I was able to distinguish beautiful Grecian faces and august Egyptian faces, and now and again to name a divinity by the staff in his hand or by a bird fluttering over his head ; and soon every mortal foot danced by the white foot of an immortal ; and in the troubled eyes that looked into untroubled shadowy eyes, I saw the brightness of uttermost desire, as though they had found at length, after unreckonable wandering, the lost love

of their youth. Sometimes, but only for a moment, I saw a faint solitary figure with a veiled face, and carrying a faint torch, flit among the dancers, but like a dream within a dream, like a shadow of a shadow, and I knew, by an understanding born from a deeper fountain than thought, that it was Eros himself, and that his face was veiled because no man or woman from the beginning of the world has ever known what Love is or looked into his eyes; for Eros alone of divinities is altogether a spirit; and hides in passions not of his essence, if he would commune with a mortal heart. So that if a man love nobly he knows Love through infinite pity, unspeakable trust, unending sympathy; and if ignobly, through vehement jealousy, sudden hatred, and unappeasable desire; but unveiled Love he never knows. While I thought these things, a voice cried to me from the crimson figures, "Into the dance, there is none that can be spared out of the dance; into the dance, into the dance, that the gods may make them bodies out of the substance of our hearts;" and before I could answer, a mysterious wave of passion, that seemed like the soul of the dance moving within our souls, took hold of me and I was swept, neither consenting nor refusing, into the midst. I was dancing with an immortal august woman, who had black lilies in her hair, and her dreamy gesture seemed laden with a wisdom more profound than the darkness that is between star and star, and with a love like the love that breathed upon the waters; and as we danced on and on, the incense drifted over us and round us, covering us away as in the heart of the world, and ages seemed to pass, and tempests to awake and perish in the folds of our robes and in her heavy hair.

Suddenly I remembered that her eyelids had never quivered and that her lilies had not dropped a black petal, or shaken from their places, and understood with a great horror that I danced with one who was more or less than human, and who was drinking up my soul as an ox drinks up a wayside pool, and I fell, and darkness passed over me.

V

When I awoke I was lying on a roughly painted floor, and on the ceiling, which was at no great distance, was a roughly painted rose, and about me on the wall a half-finished painting. The pillars and the censers had gone; and about me, wrapped in disordered robes, lay a score of sleepers, their upturned faces looking to my imagination like hollow masks; and a chill dawn was shining down upon them, from a long window I had not noticed before; and outside the sea roared angrily. I saw Michael Robartes lying at

a little distance, and beside him an overset bowl of wrought bronze which looked as though it had once held incense.

I had no thought but to get away, and to forget all. The door of the room opened with a push, and hurrying along the passage, where the bare boards clattered under my feet, I found the front door by the light of a single oil lamp, that hung from the ceiling, mingling its yellow flame with the morning light. I hurried along the pier, between brown nets and old spars, the spray driving in my face; but had not gone far before I met a group of stonemasons going to their morning work. They went a few yards past me and then one of them, an old man with iron-gray hair, turned and cried: "Idolater, idolater, go back to your she dhoules, go down to hell with your she dhoules!" I scarcely heard them, for other voices were in my ears. Voices uttering reproaches that were forgotten the moment they were spoken, as a dream is forgotten on waking.

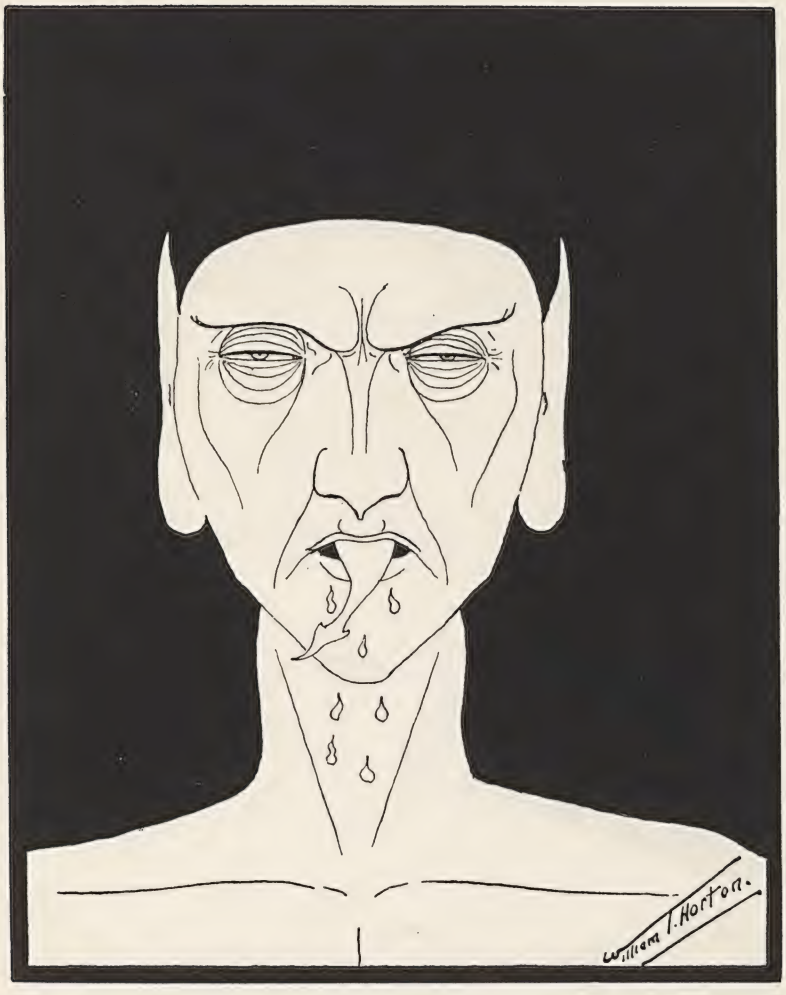
From that day I have never failed to carry the rosary about my neck, and whenever the indefinite world, which has but half lost its empire over my heart and my intellect, though my conscience and my soul are free, is about to claim a new mastery, I press the cross to my heart and say: "He whose name is legion is at our doors, deceiving our intellects with subtlety and flattering our hearts with beauty, so that we have no trust but in Thee." And then the war that wages within me at all other times is still and I am at peace.

W. B. YEATS.

Three Visions

by

William T. Horton



"They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips."—PSALM cxl. 3.

"Giving heed to seducing spirits."—1 TIMOTHY, iv. 1.

"Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—MATTHEW, vii. 14.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

I

FOR some years the name of Friedrich Nietzsche has been the war-cry of opposing factions in Germany. It is not easy to take up a German periodical without finding some trace of the passionate admiration or denunciation which this man has called forth. If we turn to Scandinavia or to France, whither his fame and his work are now also penetrating, we find that the same results have followed. And we may expect a similar outburst in England now that a complete translation of his works has begun to appear. At present, however, I know of no attempt to deal with Nietzsche from the British point of view, and that is my excuse for trying to define his personality and influence. I do not come forward as the champion either of Nietzschianism or Anti-Nietzschianism. It appears to me that any human individuality that has strongly aroused the love and hatred of men must be far too complex for absolute condemnation, or absolute approval. Apart from praise or blame, which seem here alike impertinent, Nietzsche is without doubt an extraordinarily interesting figure. He is the modern incarnation of that image of intellectual pride which Marlowe created in Faustus. A man who has certainly stood at the finest summit of modern culture, who has thence made the most determined effort ever made to destroy modern morals, and who now leads a life as near to death as any life outside the grave can be, must needs be a tragic figure. It is a figure full of significance, for it represents, perhaps, the greatest spiritual force which has appeared since Goethe, full of interest also to the psychologist, and surely not without its pathos, perhaps its horror, for the man in the street.

It is only within the last year that it has become possible to study Nietzsche's life-history. For a considerable period his early home at Naumberg has been the receptacle of Nietzsche archives of all kinds, and now his sister, Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche, has utilized this copious material in the production of an authoritative biography. This sister is herself a remarkable

person ; for many years she lived in close association with her brother so that she was supposed, though without reason, to have exerted an influence over his thought ; then she married Dr. Förster, the founder of the New Germany colony in Paraguay ; on his death she returned home to write the history of the colony, and has since devoted herself to the care of her brother and his fame. Only the first volume of the *Leben Nietzsche's* has yet appeared, but it enables us to trace his development to adult life and throws light on his whole career.

Nietzsche belonged to a noble Polish family called Nietzky, who on account of strong Protestant convictions abandoned their country and their title during the eighteenth century and settled in Germany. Notwithstanding the large amount of German blood in his veins, he always regarded himself as essentially a Pole. The Poles seemed to him the best endowed and most knightly of Slavonic peoples, and he once remarked that it was only by virtue of a strong mixture of Slavonic blood that the Germans entered the ranks of gifted nations. He termed the Polish Chopin the deliverer of music from German heaviness and stupidity, and when he speaks of another Pole, Copernicus, who reversed the judgment of the whole world, one may divine a reference to what in later years Nietzsche regarded as his own mission. In adult life Nietzsche's keen and strongly marked features were distinctly Polish, and when abroad he was frequently greeted by Poles as a fellow-countryman ; at Sorrento, where he once spent a winter, the country people called him Il Polacco.

Like Emerson (to whose writings he was strongly attracted throughout life) and many another strenuous philosophic revolutionary, Nietzsche came of a long race of Christian ministers. On both sides his ancestors were preachers, and from first to last the preacher's fervour was in his own blood. The eldest of three children (of whom one died in infancy), Friedrich Nietzsche was born in 1844 at Röcken, near Lützen, in Saxony. His father —who shortly after his son's birth fell down the parsonage steps, injuring his head so severely that he died within twelve months—is described as a man of noble and poetic nature, with a special talent for music, inherited by his son ; he belonged to a large and very healthy family who mostly lived to extreme old age, preserving their mental and physical vigour to the last. The Nietzsches were a proud, sincere folk, very clannish, looking askance at all who were not Nietzsches. Nietzsche's mother, said to be a charming woman and possessed of much physical vigour, was again a clergyman's daughter. The Oehler family, to which she belonged, was also very

large, very healthy, and very long-lived; she was only eighteen at her son's birth, and is still alive to care for him in his complete mental decay. I note these facts, which are given with much precision and detail in the biography, because they certainly help us to understand Nietzsche. It is evident that he is no frail hectic flame of a degenerating race. There seems to be no trace of insanity or nervous disorder at any point in the family history, as far back as it is possible to go. On the contrary, he belonged to extremely vigorous stocks, possessing unusual moral and physical force, people of "character." A similar condition of things is not seldom found in the history of genius. In such a case the machine is, as it were, too highly charged with inherited energy, and works at a pressure which ultimately brings it to perdition. All genius must work without rest, it cannot do otherwise; only the most happily constituted genius works without haste.

The sister's account of the children's early life is a very charming part of this record, and one which in the nature of things rarely finds place in a biography. She describes her first memories of the boy's pretty face, his long fair hair, and large, dark, serious eyes. He could not speak until he was nearly three years old, but at four he began to read and write. He was a quiet, rather obstinate child, with fits of passion which he learnt to control at a very early age; his self-control became so great that, as a boy, on more than one occasion he deliberately burnt his hand, to show that Mucius Scævola's act was but a trifling matter.

The widowed mother went with her children to settle at Naumberg on the Saale with her husband's mother, a woman of fine character with views of her own, one of which was that children of all classes should first be brought up together. Little Fritz was therefore sent to the town school, but the experiment was not altogether successful. He was a serious child, fond of solitude, and was called "the little parson" by his comrades. "The fundamental note of his disposition," writes a schoolfellow in after life, "was a certain melancholy which expressed itself in his whole being." He avoided his fellows and sought beautiful scenery, as he continued to do throughout life. At the same time he was a well-developed, vigorous boy, who loved games of various kinds, especially those of his own invention. But although the children lived to the full the fantastic life of childhood, the sister regretfully confesses that they remained models of propriety. Fritz was "a very pious child; he thought much about religious matters and was always concerned to put his thoughts into practice." It is curious that, notwithstanding his instinctive sympathy with the Greek spirit and his philological aptitudes, he found Greek specially

difficult to learn. At the age of ten appeared his taste for verse-making, and also for music, and he soon began to show that inherited gift for improvisation by which he was always able to hold his audience spell-bound, Even as a boy the future moralist made a deep impression on those who knew him, and he even reminded one person of the youthful Jesus in the Temple. "We Nietzsches hate lies," an aunt was accustomed to say; in Friedrich sincerity was a very deep-rooted trait, and he exercised an involuntary educational influence on those who came near him.

In 1858 a place was found for him at Pforta, a remarkable school of almost military discipline. Here many of the lines of his future activity were definitely laid down. At an even earlier date, excited by the influence of Humboldt, he had been fascinated by the ideal of universal culture, and at Pforta his intellectual energies began to expand. Here also, in 1859, when a pianoforte edition of "Tristan" was first published, Nietzsche became an enthusiastic Wagnerian, and "Tristan" always remained for him music *par excellence;* he was also attracted to Berlioz. Here, too, he began those philological studies which led some years later to a professorship. He turned to philology, however, as he himself recognized, because of the need he felt to anchor himself to some cool logical study which would not grip his heart like the restless and exciting artistic instincts which had hitherto chiefly moved him. During the latter part of his stay at this very strenuous educational establishment young Nietzsche was a less brilliant pupil than during the earlier part. His own individuality was silently growing beneath the disciplinary pressure which would have dwarfed a less vigorous individuality. His philosophic aptitudes began to develop and take form; he wished also to devote himself to music; and he pined at the confinement, longing for the forest and the woodman's axe. It was the beginning of a long struggle between the impulses of his own self-centred nature and the duties imposed from without, by the school, the university, and, later, his professorship; he always strove to broaden and deepen these duties to the scope of his own nature, but the struggle remained. It was the immediate result of this double strain that, during 1862, strong and healthy as the youth appeared, he began to suffer from headaches and eye-troubles, cured by temporary removal from the school. He remained extremely short-sighted, and it was only by an absurd error in the routine examination that in later years he was passed for military service in the artillery.

In the following year, 1863, Nietzsche met, and was for a while attracted by, a schoolfellow's sister, an ethereal little Berlin girl, who appealed to "the large, broad-shouldered, shy, rather solemn and stiff youth." To this early

experience, which never went beyond poetic *schwärmerei*, his sister is inclined to trace the origin of Nietzsche's view of women as very fragile, tender little buds. The experience is also interesting because it appears to stand alone in his life. We strike here on an organic abnormality in this congenital philosopher. Nietzsche's attitude was not the crude misogyny of Schopenhauer, who knew women chiefly as women of the streets. Nietzsche knew many of the finest women of his time, and he sometimes speaks with insight and sympathy of the world as it appears to women; but there was clearly nothing in him to answer to any appeal to passion, and his attitude is well summed up in an aphorism of his own "Zarathustra": "It is better to fall into the hands of a murderer than into the dreams of an ardent woman." "All his life long," his sister writes, "my brother remained completely apart from either great passion or vulgar love. His whole passion lay in the world of knowledge; only very temperate emotions remained over for anything else. In later life he was grieved that he had never attained to *amour passion*, and that every inclination to a feminine personality quickly changed to a tender friendship, however fascinatingly pretty the fair one might be." He would expend much sympathy on unhappy lovers, yet he would shake his head, saying to himself or others: "And all that over a little girl!"

Young Nietzsche left Pforta, in 1863, with the most various and incompatible scientific tastes and interests (always excepting in mathematics, for which he never possessed any aptitude), but, as he himself remarked, none that would fit him for any career. One point in regard to the termination of his school-life is noteworthy: he chose Theognis as the subject of his valedictory dissertation. His meditations on this moralist and aristocrat, so contemptuous of popular rule, may have served as the foundation of some of his own later views on Greek culture. In 1864 he became a student at Bonn, and the year that followed was of special import in his inner development; he finally threw off the beliefs of his early youth; he discovered his keen critical faculty; and his self-contained independence became a visible mark of his character, though always disguised by his amiable and courteous manners. At Bonn his life seems to have been fairly happy, though he was by no means a typical German student. He spent much money, but it was chiefly on his artistic tastes—music and the theatre—or on little tours. No one could spend less on eating and drinking; like Goethe and like Heine, he had no love of smoking and drinking, and he was repelled by the thick, beery good-humour of the German student. People who drink beer and smoke pipes every evening, he always held, were incapable of understanding his philosophy; for

they could not possibly possess the clarity of mind needed to grasp any delicate or complex intellectual problem. He returned home from Bonn "a picture of health and strength, broad-shouldered, brown, with rather fair thick hair, and exactly the same height as Goethe;" and then went to continue his studies at Leipzig.

Notwithstanding the youth's efforts to subdue his emotional and æsthetic restlessness by cool and hard work, he was clearly tortured by the effort to find a philosophic home for himself in the world. This effort absorbed him all day long, frequently nearly all the night. At this time he chanced to take up on a bookstall a totally unknown work, entitled "Der Welt als Wille und Vorstellung;" in obedience to an unusual impulse he bought the book without consideration, and from that moment began an acquaintance with Schopenhauer which for many years exerted a deep influence on his life. At that time, probably, he could have had no better guide into paths of peace; but even as a student he was a keen critic of Schopenhauer's system, valuing him chiefly as, in opposition to Kant, "the philosopher of a re-awakened classical period, a Germanized Hellenism." Schumann's music and long solitary walks aided in the work of recuperation. A year or two later Nietzsche met the other great god who shared with Schopenhauer his early worship. "I cannot bring my heart to any degree of critical coolness before this music," he wrote, in 1868, after listening to the overture to the "Meistersingers"; "every fibre and nerve in me thrills; it is a long time since I have been so carried away." I quote these words, for we shall, I think, find later that they have their significance. A few weeks afterwards he was invited to meet the master, and thus began a relationship that for Nietzsche was fateful.

Meanwhile his philological studies were bringing him distinction. A lecture on Theognis was pronounced by Ritschl to be the best work by a student of Nietzsche's standing that he had ever met with. Then followed investigations into the sources of Suidas, a lengthy examination *De fontibus Diogenis Laertii*, and palæographic studies in connection with Terence, Statius, and Orosius. He was now also consciously perfecting his German style, treating language, he remarks, as a musical instrument on which one must be able to improvise, as well as play what is merely learnt by heart. In 1869, when only in his twenty-sixth year, and before he had taken his doctor's degree, he accepted the chair of classical philology at Basel. He was certainly, as he himself said, not a born philologist. He had devoted himself to philology—I wish to insist on this significant point—as a sedative and tonic to his restless energy; in this he was doubtless wise, though his sister

seems to suggest that he thereby increased his mental strain. But he had no real vocation for philology, and it is curious that when the Basel chair was offered to him he was proposing to himself to throw aside philology for chemistry. Philologists, he declares again and again, are but factory hands in the service of science. At the best philology is a waste of acuteness, since it merely enables us to state facts which the study of the present would teach us much more swiftly and surely. Thus it was that he instinctively broadened and deepened every philological question he took up, making it a channel for philosophy and morals. With his specifically philological work we are not further concerned.

I have been careful to present the main facts in Nietzsche's early development because they seem to me to throw light on the whole of his later development. So far he had published nothing except in philological journals. In 1872, after he had settled at Basel,[1] appeared his first work, an essay entitled "Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik," dedicated to Wagner. The conception of this essay was academic, but in Nietzsche's hands the origin of tragedy became merely the text for an exposition of his own philosophy of art at this period. He traces two art impulses in ancient Greece: one, starting in the phenomena of dreaming, which he associates with Apollo; the other, starting in the phenomena of intoxication, associated with Dionysos, and through singing, music and dithyramb leading up to the lyric. The union of these, which both imply a pessimistic view of life, produced folk-song and finally tragedy, which is thus the outcome of Dionysiac music fertilized by Apollonian imagery. Socrates the optimist, with his views concerning virtue as knowledge, vice as ignorance, and his identification of virtue with happiness, led to the decay of tragedy and the triumph of Alexandrian culture, in the net of which the whole modern world is still held. Now, however, German music is producing a new birth of tragedy through Wagner, who has again united music and myth, and inaugurated an era of German art culture. This remarkable essay produced considerable controversy. It is characteristic of Nietzsche's first period, as we may call all he wrote before 1876, in its insistence on the all-importance of æsthetic as opposed to intellectual culture; and it is characteristic of his whole work in its grip of the connection between the problems and solutions of Hellenic times and the problems and solutions of the modern world. For Nietzsche the

[1] With the migration to Basel the "Leben Nietzsche's" at present ends; and I am, therefore, forced to rely on more fragmentary data in outlining the following years of Nietzsche's life.

Greek world was not the model of beautiful mediocrity imagined by Winckelmann and Goethe, nor did it date from the era of rhetorical idealism inaugurated by Plato. The real Hellenic world came earlier, and the true Hellenes were sturdy realists enamoured of life, reverencing all its manifestations and returns, and holding in highest honour that sexual symbol of life which Christianity, with its denial of life, despises. Plato Nietzsche hated ; he had wandered from all the fundamental instincts of the Hellene. His childish dialectics can only appeal, Nietzsche said, to those who are ignorant of the French masters like Fontenelle. The best cure for Plato, he held, is Thucydides, the last of the old Hellenes who were brave in the face of reality ; Plato fled from reality into the ideal and was a Christian before his time.

Between 1873 and 1876 Nietzsche wrote four essays—on David Strauss, the Use and Abuse of History in relation to Life, Schopenhauer as an Educator, and Richard Wagner—which were collectively published as "Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen." If in his first essay Nietzsche may seem to appear as the champion of the modern Teuton, it was for the first and last time. He made ample amends in the essay on Strauss. That essay was written soon after the great war, amid the resulting outburst of flamboyant patriotism and the widely-expressed conviction that the war was a victory of "German culture." Fresh from the world of Greece, Nietzsche pours contempt on that assumption. Culture, he says, is, above all, unity of artistic style in every expression of a people's life. The exuberance of knowledge in which a German glories is neither a necessary means of culture nor a sign of it, being, indeed, more allied to the opposite of culture—to barbarism. It is in this barbarism that the modern German lives, that is to say, in a chaotic mixture of all styles. Look at his clothing, Nietzsche continues, his houses, his streets, all his manners and customs. They are a turmoil of all styles in which he peacefully lives and moves. Such culture is really a phlegmatic absence of all sense of culture. Largely, also, it is merely a bad imitation of the real and productive culture of France which it is supposed to have conquered in 1870. Let there be no chatter, he concludes, about the triumph of German culture, for at present no real German culture exists. The heroic figures of the German past were not "classics," as some imagine ; they were seekers after a genuine German culture, and so regarded themselves. The would-be children of culture in Germany to-day are Philistines without knowing it, and the only unity they have achieved is a methodical barbarism. Nietzsche attacks Strauss by no means as a theologian, but as a typical culture-Philistine. He was moved to this by the recent publication of "Der

Alte und der Neue Glaube." I can well understand the emotions with which that book filled him, for I, too, read it soon after its publication, and can well recall the painful impression made on me by its homely pedestrianism, the dull lack of imagination of the man who could only compare the world to a piece of machinery, an engine that creaks in the working, a sort of vast Lancashire mill in which we must spend every moment in feverish labour, and for our trouble perhaps be caught between the wheels and cogs. But I was young, and my youthful idealism, eager for some vital and passionate picture of the world, inevitably revolted against so tawdry and mechanical a conception. Nietzsche, then and ever, failed to perceive that there is room, after all, for the modest sturdy bourgeois labourer who, at the end of a hard life in the service of truth, sits down to enjoy his brown beer and Haydn's quartettes, and to repeat his homely confession of faith in the world as he sees it. Nietzsche failed to realize that Strauss's limitations were essential to the work he had to do, and that he remained a not unworthy follower of those German heroes who were not "classics," but honest seekers after the highest they knew. In this hypertrophied repulsion for the everyday bourgeois work of the intellectual world we touch on a defect in Nietzsche's temperament which we must regard as congenital, and which wrought in him at last to wildest issues.

In another of these essays, "Schopenhauer als Erzieher," Nietzsche sets forth his opinions concerning his early master in philosophy. It is a significant indication of the qualities that attracted him to Schopenhauer that he compares him to Montaigne, thus at once revealing his own fundamental optimism, and the admiration which he then and always felt for the great French masters of wisdom. He regards Schopenhauer as the leader from Kant's caves of critical scepticism to the open sky with its consoling stars. Schopenhauer saw the world as a whole, and was not befooled by the analysis of the colours and canvas wherewith the picture is painted. Kant, in spite of the impulse of his genius, never became a philosopher. "If anyone thinks I am thus doing Kant an injustice, he cannot know what a philosopher is, *i.e.*, not merely a great thinker but also a real man;" and he goes on to explain that the mere scholar who is accustomed to let opinions, ideas, and things in books always intervene between him and facts, will never see facts, and will never be a fact to himself; whereas the philosopher must regard himself as the symbol and abbreviation of all the facts of the world. It remained always an axiom with Nietzsche that the philosopher must first of all be a "real man."

In this essay also Nietzsche first expressed his conception of the value of individuality. Shakespeare had asked:

> "Which can say more
> Than this rich praise, that you alone are you?"

But Shakespeare was only addressing a single beloved friend. Nietzsche addresses the same thought to the common "you." "At bottom every man well knows that he can only live one single life in the world, and that never again will so strange a chance shake together into unity such singularly varied elements as he holds: he knows that, but he hides it like a bad conscience." This was a sane and democratic individualism; in later years, as we shall see, it assumed stranger shapes.

The essay on Wagner starts from the standpoint reached in the previous essays. There is a deep analogy for those to whom distance is no obscuring cloud, he remarks, between Kant and the Eleatics, Schopenhauer and Empedocles, Æschylus and Wagner. "The world has been orientalised long enough, and men now seek to be hellenised." The Gordian knot has been cut and its strands are fluttering to the ends of the world; we need a series of Anti-Alexanders mighty enough to bring together the scattered threads of life. Wagner is such an Anti-Alexander, a great astringent force in the world. For "it is not possible to present the highest and purest operations of dramatic art, and not therewith to renew morals and the state, education and affairs." Bayreuth is the sacred consecration on the morning of battle. "The battles which art brings before us are a simplification of the actual battles of life; its problems are an abbreviation of the endlessly involved reckoning of human action and aspiration. But herein lies the greatness and value of art, that it calls forth the appearance of a simpler world, a shorter solution of the problems of life. No one who suffers in life can dispense with that appearance, just as no one can dispense with sleep." Wagner has simplified the world; he has related music to life, the drama to music; he has intensified the visible things of the world, and made the audible visible. Just as Goethe found in poetry an expression for the painter's vocation he had missed, so Wagner utilized in music his dramatic instinct. And Nietzsche further notes the democratic nature of Wagner's art, so strenuously warm and bright as to reach even the lowliest in spirit. Wagner takes off the stigma that clings to the word "common," and brings to all the means of attaining spiritual freedom. "For," says Nietzsche, "whosoever will be free, must make himself free; freedom is no fairy's gift to fall into any man's lap." Such are

the leading thoughts in an essay which remains an interesting philosophic appreciation of the place of Wagner's art in the modern world.

"Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" brings to an end Nietzsche's first period, and may itself be said to lead up to the crash which inaugurated his later period. Hitherto Nietzsche's work was unquestionably sane both in substance and form. No doubt it had aroused much criticism; work so vigorous, sincere, and independent could not fail to arouse hostility. But as we look back to-day, these fine essays represent, with much youthful enthusiasm, the best that was known and thought in Germany a quarter of a century ago. Nietzsche's opinions on Wagner and Schopenhauer, on individualism and democracy, the significance of early Hellenism for moderns, the danger of an excessive historical sense, the conception of culture less as a striving after intellectual knowledge than as that which arouses within us the philosopher, the artist, and the saint—all these ideas, wild as some of them seemed to Nietzsche's German contemporaries, are the ideas which have now largely permeated European culture. The same cannot be said of his later ideas.

It was at the first Bayreuth festival in 1876 that this chapter in Nietzsche's life was finally closed. Many strange theories have been put forward to account for the change that then came over him. They may be thrust aside. No mere disappointment with the festival, or with "Parsifal," or with Wagner's growing conservatism, no mere offence to Nietzsche's own *amour-propre*, suffice to explain so radical an upheaval. The change was more fundamental. The excitement of the festival merely precipitated an organic catastrophe towards which he had long been tending. I have already noted passages which indicate that he was himself aware of a consuming flame within, and that from time to time he made efforts to check its ravages. That it was this internal flame which really produced the breakdown is shown by the narrative of Nietzsche's friend, Dr. Kretzer, who was with him at Bayreuth. It was evident he was seriously ill, Kretzer tells us, utterly changed and broken down. His eye-troubles were associated, if not with actual brain disease, at all events with a high degree of neurasthenia, and the physical effect of the performance was so overwhelming that he was only able to be present at a few scenes of the "Nibelungen." At Bayreuth, Nietzsche was forced to realize the peril of his position as he had never realized it before. He could no longer disguise from himself that he must break with all the passionate interests of his past. It was an essential measure of hygiene, almost a surgical operation. This is indeed how he has himself put the matter. In the preface

to "Der Fall Wagner," he said that it had been to him a necessary self-discipline to take part against all that was morbid within himself, against Wagner, against Schopenhauer, against all the impassioning interests of modern life, and to view the world, so far as possible, with the philosopher's eyes, from an immense height. And again he speaks of Wagner's art as a beaker of ecstasy so subtle and profound that it acts like poison and leaves no remedy at last but flight from the syren's cave. Nietzsche was henceforth in the position of a gouty subject who is forced to abandon port wine and straightway becomes an apostle of total abstinence. The remedy seems to have been fairly successful. But the disease was in his bones. Impassioning interests that were far more subtly poisonous slowly developed within him, and twelve years later flight had become impossible, even if he was still able to realize the need for flight.

Nietzsche broke very thoroughly with his past, yet the break has been exaggerated, and he himself often helped to exaggerate it. He was in the position of a beleaguered city which has been forced to abandon its outer walls and concentrate itself in the citadel; and however it may have been in ancient warfare, in spiritual affairs such a state of things involves an offensive attitude towards the former line of defence. The positions we have abandoned constitute a danger to the positions we have taken up. Many of the world's fiercest persecutors have but persecuted their old selves, and there seems to be psychological necessity for such an attitude. Yet a careful study of Nietzsche's earlier activity reveals many germs of later developments. The critical attitude towards conventional morality, the individualism, the optimism, the ideal of heroism, which dominate his later thought, exist as germs in his earlier work. Even the flagrant contrast between "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" and "Der Fall Wagner" was the outcome of a gradual development. In the earlier essay Nietzsche had justly pointed out that Wagner's instincts were fundamentally dramatic. As years went on he brooded over this idea; the nimble and lambent wit of his later days played around it until Wagner became a mere actor in his work and in his life, a rhetorician, an incarnate falsehood, the personification of latter-day decadence, the Victor Hugo of music, the Bernini of music, the modern Cagliostro. At the same time he admits that Wagner represents the modern spirit, and that it is reasonable for a musician to say that though he hates Wagner he can tolerate no other music. The fact is that Nietzsche was not Teuton enough to abide for ever with Wagner. He compares him contemptuously with Hegel, cloud-compellers both, masters of German mists and German mysticism, worshippers of Wotan,

the god of bad weather, the god of the Germans. "How could they miss what we, we Halcyonians, miss in Wagner—*la gaya scienza*, the light feet, wit, fire, grace, strong logic, the dance of the stars, arrogant intellectuality, the quivering light of the south, the smooth sea—perfection?" It is evident that Nietzsche had not gained complete mastery of his own personality in his earlier work. It is brilliant, full of fine perceptions and critical insight, but as a personal utterance incomplete. It renders the best ideas of the time, not the best ideas that Nietzsche could contribute to the time. The shock of 1876 may have been a step towards the disintegration of his intellect, but it was also a rally, a step towards self-realization. Nietzsche had no genuine affinity with Schopenhauer or with Wagner, though they were helpful to his development; he was no pessimist, he was no democrat. As he himself said, "I understood the philosophic pessimism of the nineteenth century as the symptom of a finer strength of thought, a more victorious fullness of life. In the same way Wagner's music signified to me the expression of a Dionysiac mightiness of soul in which I seemed to hear, as in an earthquake, the upheaval of the primitive powers of life, after age-long repression." Now he only needed relief, "golden, tender, oily melodies" to soothe the leaden weight of life, and these he found in "Carmen."

Any discussion of the merits of the question as between Wagner and Bizet, the earlier and the later Nietzsche, seems to me out of place, though much has been made of it by those who delight to see a giant turn and rend himself. Nietzsche himself said he was writing for psychologists, and it is not unfair to add that it is less "Wagner's case" that he presents to us than "Nietzsche's case." For my own part—speaking as one who finds Wagner the greatest among modern musicians, and "Carmen" the most delightful modern opera outside Wagner—I can address both the early and the late Nietzsche in the words habitually used by the landlord of the "Rainbow:" "You're both wrong and you're both right, as I allus says." Most of the mighty quarrels that have sent men to battle and the stake might have been appeased had both sides recognized that both were right in their affirmations, both wrong in their denials.

Nietzsche occupied his chair at Basel for some years longer; in 1880 his health forced him to resign and he was liberally pensioned. As a professor he treated the most difficult questions of Greek study, and devoted his chief attention to his best pupils, who in their turn adored him. Basel is an admirable residence for a cosmopolitan thinker; it was easy for Nietzsche to keep in touch with all that went on from Paris to St. Petersburg. He was also on

terms of more or less intimate friendship with the finest spirits in Switzerland, with Keller the novelist, Böcklin the painter, Burckhardt the historian. We are told that he was a man of great personal charm in social intercourse. But his associates at Basel never suspected that in this courteous and amiable professor was stored up an explosive energy which would one day be felt in every civilized land. With pen in hand his criticism of life was unflinching, his sincerity arrogant; when the pen was dropped he became modest, reserved, almost timorous.

The work he produced between 1877 and 1882 seems to me to represent the maturity of his genius. It includes "Menschliches, Allzumenschliches," "Morgenröthe," and "Die Frohliche Wissenschaft (*la gaya scienza*)." In form all these volumes belong to *pensée* literature. They deal with art, with religion, with morals and philosophy, with the relation of all these to life. Nietzsche shows himself in these *pensées* above all a freethinker, emancipated from every law save that of sincerity, wide-ranging, serious, penetrative, often impassioned, as yet always able to follow his own ideal of self-restraint.

After leaving Basel he spent the following nine years chiefly at health resorts and in travelling. We find him at Sorrento, Venice, Genoa, Turin, Sils Maria, as well as at Leipzig. Doubtless his fresh and poignant *pensées* are largely the outcome of strenuous solitary walks in the Engadine or among the Italian lakes. We may assume that during most of these years he was fighting, on the whole successfully fighting, for mental health. Yet passages that occur throughout his books seem to suggest that his thoughts may have sometimes turned to the goal towards which he was tending. It is a mistake, he points out, to suppose that insanity is always the symptom of a degenerating culture, although to nod towards the asylum is a convenient modern way of slaying spiritual tyrants; it is in primitive and developing stages of culture that insanity has played its chief part; it was only by virtue of what seemed to be the "Divine" turbulence of insanity and epilepsy that any new moral law could make progress among early cultures. Just as for us there seems a little madness in all genius, so for them there seemed a little genius in all madness, so that sorcerers and saints agonized in solitude and abstinence for some gleam of madness which would bring them faith in themselves and openly justify their mission.

What may, perhaps, be called Nietzsche's third period began in 1883 with "Also sprach Zarathustra," the most extraordinary of all his works, mystical in form, and recalling the oracular aphoristic manner of the Hebrews, but not mystical in substance. It was followed by "Jenseits von Gut und Böse,"

"Zur Genealogie der Moral," "Der Fall Wagner," and "Götzendämmerung." It is during this period that we trace the growth of the magnification of his own personal mission, which finally became a sort of megalomania. In form the books of this period are somewhat less fragmentary than those of the second period; in substance they are marked by their emphatic, often extravagant, almost reckless insistence on certain views of morality. If in the first period he was an apostle of culture, in the second a freethinker, pronouncing judgment on all things in heaven and earth, he was now exclusively a moralist, or, as he would prefer to say, an immoralist. It was during this period that he worked out his "master morality"—the duty to be strong—in opposition to the "slave morality" of Christianity, with its glorification of weakness and pity, and that he consistently sought to analyze and destroy the traditional conceptions of good and evil on which our current morality rests. The last work which he planned, but never completed, was a re-valuation of all values, "Umwerthung aller Werthe," which would have been his final indictment of the modern world, and the full statement of his own immoralism and Dionysiac philosophy.

It is sometimes said that Nietzsche's mastery of his thought and style was increasing up to the last. This I can scarcely admit, even as regards style. No doubt there is a light and swift vigour of movement in these last writings which before he had never attained. He pours out a shimmering stream of golden phrases with which he has intoxicated himself, and tries to intoxicate us. We may lend ourselves to the charm, but it has no enduring hold. This master of gay or bitter invective no longer possesses the keenly reasoned and piercing insight of the earlier Nietzsche. We feel that he has become the victim of obsessions which drive him like a leaf before the wind, and all his exuberant wit is unsubstantial and pathetic as that of Falstaff. The devouring flame has at length eaten the core out of the man and his style, leaving only this coruscating shell. And at a touch even this thin shell collapsed into smouldering embers.

From a child Nietzsche was subject to strangely prophetic dreams. In a dream which, when a boy, he put into literary form, he tells how he seemed to be travelling forward amid a glorious landscape, while carolling larks ascended to the clouds, and his whole life seemed to stretch before him in a vista of happy years; "and suddenly a shrill cry reached our ears; it came from the neighbouring lunatic asylum." Even in 1876 it became visible to his friends that Nietzsche attached extraordinary importance to his own work. After he wrote "Zarathustra," this self-exaltation increased, and began to find expres-

sion in his work. Latterly, it is said, he came to regard himself as the incarnation of the genius of humanity. It has always been found a terrible matter to war with the moral system of one's age; it will have its revenge, one way or another, from within or from without, whatever happens after. Nietzsche strove for nothing less than to remodel the moral world after his own heart's desire, and his brain was perishing of exhaustion in the immense effort. In 1889—at the moment when his work at last began to attract attention—he became hopelessly insane. A period of severe hallucinatory delirium led on to complete dementia, and he passes beyond our sight.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

THE FORGE

LONG and narrow shop, magenta black
Mottled with rose; ten fires along one wall.
Faint day comes through the skylight overhead
Smoke-grimed to orange, when it comes at all.
The blast shut off for breakfast, fires are slack.

The buzzing neighbouring engine quieted,
You hear the mates talking from berth to berth;
The silence is complete. The seldom noises
Reverberate as, quaintly, under earth
The graves repeat the sayings of the dead.

Contrasted with the metals, human voices
Sound hoarse and soft, as out of hollowed wood.
Their beverage made: of boiling water, stained
With tea and sugar, they prepare their food:
"Tiger," to envy, even where there choice is;

Here and now, truly, not to be disdained.
Hear in what manner it is perfected;
How old world 'tis. The anvil polished bright
With leather skirt, two hearty chunks of bread,
Protecting ivory bacon, purple veined,

Are set thereon with caution; and the wight
Who owns the morsel, passes over it
A piece of red-hot iron till 'tis brown.
It cleans the tongue to hear it fizzle and spit,
If two hours' work vouchsafe no appetite.

This done, the smith has only to sit down
To eat his greasy "tiger," and drink off

His sweet, strong tea. This, being yet too hot,
Hangs in the rust-red water of the trough
To cool. The smith is sleeping, with a frown

Upon his shapeless features. This is not
The ballad wag they tell of: at his best
Maimed in his poor hands, wry, with crooked back,
Great-armed, bow-legged, and narrow in the chest.
It bends a man to make no matter what.

A rumour stirs, a hum, the blast comes back;
Shadows on wall and roof start forth and die.
Rattle of tongs, slosh, fume; unlovely night
Grown Chinese hell, to seeming, suddenly,
Where strange gods heap the fire and trim the rack.

Half shapes of light leap higher than man's height
Out from the blackness and as soon subside,
Flame-flesh-shapes, sweat-swamped clinging cotton swathed,
In violent action, following the guide
Of the smith's gesture bidding where to smite.

The smitten steel complains, all bruised and scathed,
From thud to bark, from bark to metal scream;
Through ordeal of the fire and scaling trough,
To wake it from its long-embowelled dream,
To uses brought, flame-licked and torture-bathed.

This the arena wherein stubborn stuff
With man locks strength; where elements dispute
The mastery, where breath and fire bear blaze,
Where sullen water aids, to quell the brute
Earth into shape, to make it meek enough.

And this day is the type of many days.

JOHN GRAY

THE DETERIORATION OF NANCY

[I have obtained access to the remaining portion of the Correspondence between a distinguished member of the Royal Academy and Miss Nancy Nanson, of the Variety Stage. I see that the young lady's are the more numerous and the shorter letters; and in them, as they proceed, I seem to discern some change of tone—a rather quick transition or development (call it what you will) which, if it is really there, is unlikely to have escaped the eye of her correspondent, and may perhaps even have prepared him in a certain measure for a *dénouement* which, nevertheless, when it arrived, disturbed him seriously. That, at least, is my own reading of Miss Nanson's notes. But I am possibly wrong.]

WEYMOUTH:
September 25th.

DEAR MR. ASHTON

AS I suppose you leave Weymouth to-day I will send this to London. It is only to thank you very much for your long letter and your kindness to me, in which Mother joins. I hope you are well.

I remain yours very sincerely
NANCY NANSON.

MR. CLEMENT ASHTON.

100 YORK ROAD, WATERLOO ROAD.
Oct. 20.

DEAR MR. ASHTON

I thought I should like to let you know that I have come to London. I have not an engagement yet, but I have a pantomime engagement in view.

With best wishes I remain yours sincerely
NANCY NANSON.

CLEMENT ASHTON, ESQ: R.A.

100 YORK ROAD, WATERLOO ROAD.
Nov. 5.

DEAR MR. ASHTON

I was so sorry I was out when you called. If I had known you were coming I would have stayed at home. We are all right here. The landlady is awfully nice. I would come and see you if you appointed a time.

I think you will be glad to hear that I'm engaged for principal girl for the Pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Hoxton, by R. Solomon, Esq. In about a month we shall begin rehearsing. I am engaged for eight weeks.

We hope you are well.

Hoping to see you soon, with my best wishes, in which Mother unites, I am yours very sincerely,

NANCY NANSON.

100 YORK ROAD, WATERLOO ROAD,
November 20.

DEAR MR. ASHTON

It was so kind of you to take me to the theatre yesterday afternoon. I must write to tell you so. How nice Miss Annie Hughes was! She makes you laugh and cry. I like her more than any actress I have ever seen. The man was funny, wasn't he!

Thanking you again, and with best regards from Mother, believe me yours very sincerely

NANCY NANSON.

P.S. I am to do an extra on Saturday nights at the Bedford Camden Town, and at Gatti's, Westminster Bridge Road. I am very pleased, as I am tired of 'resting.' When we go to Hoxton we shall take lodgings where there is a piano. I have been practising an acrobatic trick for the pantomime. The public likes them. The Theatre Royal, Hoxton, is more for the masses than the classes.

THE WALK, HOXTON,
Christmas Day.

DEAR MR. ASHTON

O! thank you for remembering us on Christmas Day. I was so pleased. We hope you will come to see the Panto. It went very well last night. I go very well so far. My voice sounds splendid here. It is not lost in the glass roof, as at the 'People's Delight.'

I have been so very, very busy rehearsing, I have seen very little of Hoxton yet, so I do not know how I shall like it. I shall know better soon; now that we have started the Panto.

With best wishes for a happy Christmas from Mother and from me, I am yours sincerely and gratefully, in haste,

NANCY NANSON.

THE WALK, HOXTON,
6th January.

I am glad you came to see me yesterday afternoon. How did you like me? But it was so flat. I am sorry you came to a matinée. Half the house are mere *children*, then. In the evening it is different. And they cut out part of my song yesterday. It made me cry—I was so cross. I generally jump about much more. I am much merrier. Mother and I shall be so pleased if you have time to come again.

Sincerely yours in haste,
N. NANSON.

P.S. Mr. Solomon wants to engage me for next year, I think. And for *better money*.

THE STUDIOS, WESTMINSTER,
7th January.

DEAR NANCY,

No, I did *not* think you were up to the mark yesterday. It was a *ragged* performance. I write, of course, frankly. First then, as to your singing,—I never very much believed in that. But you would sing much better if you knew that you sang badly. You would then understand that I was serious when I told you, what you really wanted was singing lessons. Voice *production*, my dear. And your speaking voice is excellent. You used it well upon the whole, yesterday. A little careless, I thought—a mistake sometimes, in the emphasis. But what is pantomime dialogue! I will come again, if you like me to see you, and you will do all that better. For agility in dancing, for vivacity in action, you seemed as good as it is possible to be. And you take in every point—even yesterday I noticed, you believed in every bit of the story. To do so, and to live in it, is the foundation of an actress. Yes, with your intelligence, with your alertness, your quick life, actress just as much as dancer you may very well be.

You come to Westminster, next week, any morning except Wednesday. I must make one more drawing of you. Not a pastel this time. I have long since done with the pastels of you. They are good as far as they go. Your colour and your dress, your movement and your pose, they record not at all unhappily. But I want a careful drawing—a drawing in line—and shall make it perhaps in pencil; perhaps even in silver-point. You are such a strange, variable child, you see—there is not one subject in you, but a hundred; and I shall not be contented till I have, somewhere else than in my memory, the

eyebrow's line, the delicate low forehead, the fine nose, half Greek (and it gains so in character as you throw your mind into your work)—all that and the curve of the open nostril. This moment, they are at my fingers' ends. And your grave sweetness!

Frank, is it not? Yet I am not a foolish person, making up to you. I am not a vulgar flatterer of the first prettiness in the street. You know how much I am an artist—heart and soul, my dear—by which I mean that unlike too many of my brethren, I am not only a painter.

Your 'notices' are good, I see. Very good. I congratulate you. The time is coming perhaps when you will *patronise* me—when you will even be so very great that you will quite 'cut' me. 'No, no,' I hear you say—indeed you said it when I saw you last—'No, no, Mr. Ashton, I should never do *that*.' You say it with your voice—and with your steady eyes you say it even more.

Until next week, then!

I am sincerely yours,
CLEMENT ASHTON.

THE WALK, HOXTON:
10*th February*.

DEAR MR. ASHTON.

Mother says, How long since we have seen you! You said you would come again to our Panto. Since that, remember, I have been twice to Westminster, to sit to you. They are going to publish one of the drawings, are they? You will put my name to it, won't you?

Saturday is my last night. Mother says, Can you come then? I shall have all my admirers. And the boys in the gallery—though you say I sing so badly—all the boys in the gallery taking up my song. After Saturday, I am booked for the Halls.

Yesterday I was taken a long drive to Hagley Wood. It is near Barnet. I have had a great deal of attention here.

I am yours very sincerely,
NANCY NANSON.

P.S. Mr. Ashton, I allow you to say anything. Be sure and tell me what you think, if you come Saturday.

THE STUDIOS, WESTMINSTER:
Sunday, 16*th Feb:*

MY DEAR NANCY:

Yes, you allow me to say any thing—for a lifetime divides us—and because I am a friend of yours I shall say the bare hard truth. I saw you

yesterday, as you know, for you espied me from the stage. From the point of view of a theatrical success, the thing was quite undoubted. You were a mass of nerves. You came across the house to us. The footlights ceased to be. Your effect was extraordinary. Shylock's 'How much more elder art thou than thy years!'—the thing he said to Portia—is a question which may be put, no doubt, with reasonableness, to many little ladies at the theatre. There is nothing like the theatre for ageing you. You, Nancy, are now, not five months, but two years older than you were last autumn. At first I was afraid of it, physically. That last time that you came to me, to the studio, your face was quite drawn: not only its expressions, its very lines, had aged. You were pale; you were worn. And sixteen!

But yesterday that was all right, again; and, Nancy, it was the deeper *You* that had altered. I—I was always an idealist, remember, and so you will forgive me. I go down to the grave, when my time comes, poet, after all, far more than craftsman. Those changes, more or less, that I notice in you—those changes not for the better, I mean—I was never blind to the possibility of them. Idealist though I am, I foresaw them—I foresaw them, with forebodings.

There was my first long letter to you. It will be well, perhaps, that I should not say anything more in detail. But read that again—the last part of it, I mean—and be warned.

But no—the detail shan't be spared you, though what it really comes to—I tell it you from my heart, and you will keep this letter to yourself—all that it really comes to is that you will be 'spoilt.' 'Spoilt' or 'ruined.' You are so sensible in many things. Clever I don't know that you are, except in your profession. It all runs into that one channel with you. Quickness of 'study,' closeness of observation, immediate faultless power of mimicry, vivacity, agility in the dance—all *that* we know; and then at home your sensitiveness, your quickness, and your helpful tact. But as to books, as to pictures, as to music beyond your showy music of the theatre, as to the things that happen in the world, and that interest people—these things are all nothing to you. Who can wonder! Your whole little eager heart is in your work. Your work is your play too—and the whole of your play. But a thirst for admiration, my dear, and vanity, vanity! Will you split, like the others, on that rock?

Last night, your face had new expressions. There were things I never saw in it, before. In that palace-scene, the slim young thing—how queenly you were, in the white silk, spangled with silver: how queenly, and withal a little contemptuous, a little scornful! I watched you, Nancy, with a keenness

horribly inconvenient for you—or the scornful look, the bored look, the *blasé* look (I have said the worst that I can say) would have passed perhaps unperceived. They were there.

Again, you acted to the house too much. I am not finding fault with you technically for that,—though you did, I think, overdo it. I am talking to the girl, and not to the stage character. There was one look at the Boxes : at a private Box rather—but I spare you.

Who the dickens are the people who have had this influence upon you?—hour by hour ; drop by drop, I suppose : here a little and there a little—in the life I begin to hate for you. . . . But it is no use hating it. I suppose that I could take you from it, if I liked. I have the money to—no overwhelming claims on me. But you would leave all this unwillingly : and, in the end, *ought* you to leave it?

My dear Nancy, I will spare you any more. But read much more than I have actually written. Imagine yourself talked to, very gravely : fancy yourself receiving a *good long, serious* talking to. Think! Think! I have finished.

My dear child, you are a good girl at heart, you know—and such an eager little fiery one—when you are not grave and sober. The stuff is in you out of which they make Sisters of Charity. The stuff is in you out of which—— But No! Why?

I am your old and fatherly, your *grand*-fatherly friend,
if you prefer it—

CLEMENT ASHTON.

Tuesday, Feb. 18th.

MY DEAR MR. ASHTON.

I cried so much when I got your letter. For you have been very kind to me. I suppose I deserved it.

NANCY.

GREAT CORAM STREET,
Thursday, Feb. 20th.

DEAR MR. ASHTON,

We have moved. Until I get into a burlesque at Easter, I am working two of the Halls. On Monday I have a new song at the Metropolitan—the 'Met'—Edgware Road, nine o'clock. New dresses, and I do a new dance. Also at Gatti's, Westminster Bridge Road, at 10.15.

Sincerely yours and gratefully,
NANCY NANSON.

GREAT CORAM STREET,
Tuesday, Feb. 25.

THE engagement only lasts a week, Mr. Ashton. Am I not going to be a favourite, then? I have tried for that music-hall kept by that faddy lady, the philanthropist. She is very *severe*. Why, she won't let you take up your skirts, even. I say, and *Mother* says, she ought to keep a *chapel*—not a music-hall.

In haste,
NANCY.

GREAT CORAM STREET.

You were always kind to me. Mother is wild. And you, *you will never forgive me.*

From
NANCY.

WESTMINSTER,
18*th April.*

MY DEAR NANCY.

At least I hurried to make the matter smoother for you at home, though, sooner or later that would have been effected anyhow; for you and your mother are at one, generally. She is really fond of you, and you of her. I have not done much for you.

And now what *can* I do? My business—if I have any—is to wait. 'Did I,' I ask myself, 'lose any opportunity of action?' Could I have stepped in, to stop you? Nancy, I talk brutally, though I would not know, with definiteness, any detail—but the valuation set by me on mere physical chastity—were it that that was in question—might be perhaps three half-pence. One friend at all events you have, between whom and yourself no mad outrageous freak of yours, raises insuperable barriers. And you feel that. Then why was I concerned for your Future, months ago? The deterioration, the slow change in you, that must be coming or have come; the undermining and deterioration, it may be—I say, that is the deep injury—but the very words draw round you like a curse. I haven't the heart left to sketch in words a sure decline. And, if I had, why should I overdo it?

Was it done by you for gain, for sudden greed, for ambition, for vanity?

Answer yourself—not me. If it had been done for love—well then at all events I might have thought of your Future differently. Nancy, I must make excuses for you—excuses in any case. Once in your short life at least, you have been near to want—that winter you and your Mother came out into the Strand, from the empty treasury of a bogus management, with sixpence in your pockets, instead of a salary. Yes, sixpence it was—that was your salary. You told me so yourself. And your voice 'went' in that cruel winter weather, as the little figure, with its slender grace, slid through the fog and blackened rain and reeking river mists of December in London. After that, Money, which seems to some people a small thing in the distance—so sure, so unimportant—must have loomed large and of *immense* importance, in the near foreground, to you. Again, of course, we have our moods. We may be taken unawares. Judgment goes—principle. All your life, Nancy—with only trivial exceptions, after all—your life is good to this hour. And in all our lives, every day has its own difficulties: every hour is a choice. Good and diligent, and sweet and bright, wise too and helpful—week after week, month after month, you answer to your helm: and then there comes one hour which leaves you rudderless. I should be hard on you indeed, if I remembered only that hour —if I forgot the ninety and nine. My dear Nancy, I am *not* hard on you!

It is late at night when I write this. And, in my thoughts, you have been with me the whole of the day. The story can't be an unusual story—and I am a man of the world, or ought to be. No, the story can't be an unusual story: but the girl is an unusual girl.

Well, you must live it down, my dear—must have done with it—must forget it. But then there is the deterioration—*some* deterioration at least—that made the thing possible. And what more may be possible—mend and patch and cobble as we will?

All day you have been in my thoughts. When I was setting my palette in the morning: arranging the light: screwing up the easel, waiting for the sitter, who was late—they are always late—I thought 'She has made a mess of it—poor little Nancy—foolish minx!' I was very silent with my sitter. I was scarcely even polite. She noticed it; and it affected her. The sitting was a failure. I bowed the lady out. Nancy Nanson in my thoughts. The luncheon table was all wrong: not a thing as it ought to have been. 'Nancy Nanson, at the Devil, poor girl!' A walk in the streets, afterwards. The omnibuses rattling past me in Victoria Street. 'Nancy Nanson—is it all up with her?' Nothing else. The bell of Christ Church, Westminster, a tinkle for Evensong. The day goes on, then! 'Nancy Nanson!' Afterwards,

in the quiet of St. James's Park, near Birdcage Walk, the clear sound of the bugle—the recall to barracks. 'Nancy Nanson!' And then, the space of the Park water, calm, as I saw it from the foot-bridge, by the five poplars—and the April evening sky, clear and serene. 'Nancy Nanson at the Devil! Poor girl! The Devil perhaps. The dear and clever irresponsible child!'

Nancy, I've no more blame for you. The vials of my anger are poured out. Months ago I said 'I shall always be your friend.' 'Go the straight way!' I said. And I believed you would. What a collapse if I must say to you, to-night, only this word—the very sound of it, connected with you, is vulgar and repulsive—'If you should get into any scrape, you know, and I can help you, come to me. I *will* help you. Right and left I will help you. I will see you through.' . . .

But only to say—*that!*

Nancy!—with deep regard and real affection,

CLEMENT ASHTON.

Post-script. But I can't end like this. Just when you want to be reproached the least, some of my sentences sound hard. Be hopeful! For, as it seems to me, whatever happened, the quite irreparable has *not* happened. Surely, surely, you can forget, for ever, one mad hour! And, from whatever point, you can begin 'the journey homeward'—to yourself. You can be the real You again; the real Nancy—your very characteristic, the perfection of the contrast between the wildness of the theatre and your happy quietude.

So at home I must think of you. With that golden wig, that adds—piquantly perhaps and yet abominably—to your years, the maddening dancer is put off. The brown-haired child, in the plain dress, is in her place—the short brown hair, the quiet eyes, the tender, sensitive mouth. Your lodging-house parlour is ornamented with a play-bill, and photographs are stuck about the mantelpiece—Miss Marie Dainton, is it? and your uncle, the plumber; and, again, a celebrity of the Halls; and somebody else, who was nice to you, a year ago, at Weymouth; some comrade you were fond of: 'She's a dear girl,' you said. In the lodging-house parlour your mother sits beside the fire-place, combing out the golden wig, after its last night's service. The kettle, in preparation for tea-time, not far off, is at the side of the fire. It begins to sing. You, Nancy, sit beyond the table, on a cane-bottomed chair; with your knees crossed—as I saw you that first time I called on you in London—your hands, so young, so nervous, and so highly bred, smooth out upon your lap a bit of wool-work that you—whose instinct is to please and to be pleasant—

are doing for your landlady. And, in the glow of the fender, lies curled up, warm and sleeping, that gray kitten rescued from misery, four days before, by you: won to you by your magnetism, or your kindness—they are both the same. In the morning, when your mother leaves your bed—leaves the tired child, worn out by the theatre, to an hour's extra resting—the soft gray thing, that you bewitched and cared for, creeps to your side—is happy.

Did they ever teach you, at your school, I wonder, verses of Wordsworth on the stock-dove? What did the stock-dove sing?

> He sang of love with quiet blending,
> Slow to begin, and never ending;
> Of serious faith, and inward glee.
> That was the song—the song for me!

Nancy!—the spirit of the stock-dove's song lies in the deepest heart of Nancy Nanson.

C. A.

[There was reason to apprehend that the Correspondence closed with this letter. One other note, however—in the round hand of Miss Nanson—has been discovered, and is therefore appended.]

GREAT CORAM STREET.

Thank you so very, *very* much—and for not asking any exact questions, too. I was a fool. Some one behaved badly to me. No doubt I 'compromised' myself. I was on deep waters. But I did *not* go under. No, Mr. Ashton.

You *have* been rather cross with me—but I was *very* troublesome. You understand the curious mixture that signs herself—and is—

Your grateful
NANCY.

FREDERICK WEDMORE.

TWO POEMS CONCERNING PEASANT VISIONARIES

A CRADLE SONG

THE faery children laugh in cradles of wrought gold,
And clap their hands together, and half close their eyes,
For winds will bear them gently when the eagle flies,
With heavy whitening wings, and a heart fallen cold:
I kiss my wailing child and press it to my breast,
And hear the narrow graves calling my child and me
Desolate winds that cry over the wandering sea;
Desolate winds that hover in the flaming West;
Desolate winds that beat the doors of Heaven, and beat
The doors of Hell, and blow there many a whimpering ghost;
And heart the winds have shaken; the unappeasable host
Is comelier than candles before Maurya's feet.

"THE VALLEY OF THE BLACK PIG"

The Irish peasantry have for generations comforted themselves, in their misfortunes, with visions of a great battle, to be fought in a mysterious valley called, "The Valley of the Black Pig," and to break at last the power of their enemies. A few years ago, in the barony of Lisadell, in county Sligo, an old man would fall entranced upon the ground from time to time, and rave out a description of the battle; and I have myself heard said that the girths shall rot from the bellies of the horses, because of the few men that shall come alive out of the valley.

THE dew drops slowly; the dreams gather: unknown spears
Suddenly hurtle before my dream-awakened eyes;
And then the clash of fallen horsemen, and the cries
Of unknown perishing armies beat about my ears.
We, who are labouring by the cromlech on the shore,
The gray cairn on the hill, when day sinks drowned in dew,
Being weary of the world's empires, bow down to you,
Master of the still stars, and of the flaming door.

W. B. YEATS.

The Rape of the Lock

by

Aubrey Beardsley

PAUL VERLAINE

I

A FIRST SIGHT OF VERLAINE

THREE years ago my thoughts were a good deal occupied by the theories and experiments which a section of the younger French poets were engaged upon. In this country, the Symbolists and Decadents of Paris had been laughed at and parodied, but, with the exception of Mr. Arthur Symons, no English critic had given their *tentatives* any serious attention. I became much interested—not wholly converted, certainly, but considerably impressed—as I studied, not what was said about them by their enemies, but what they wrote themselves. Among them all, there was but one, M. Mallarmé, whom I knew personally; him I had met, more than twenty years before, carrying the vast folio of his Manet-Poe through the length and breadth of London, disappointed but not discouraged. I learned that there were certain haunts where these later Decadents might be observed in large numbers, drawn together by the gregarious attraction of verse. I determined to haunt that neighbourhood with a butterfly-net, and see what delicate creatures with powdery wings I could catch. And, above all, was it not understood that that vaster lepidopter, that giant hawk-moth, Paul Verlaine, uncoiled his proboscis in the same absinthe-corollas?

Timidity, doubtless, would have brought the scheme to naught, if, unfolding it to Mr. Henry Harland, who knows his Paris like the palm of his hand, he had not, with enthusiastic kindness, offered to become my cicerone. He was far from sharing my interest in the Symbolo-decadent movement, and the ideas of the "poètes abscons comme la lune" left him a little cold, yet he entered at once into the sport of the idea. To race up and down the Boulevard St. Michel, catching live poets in shoals, what a charming game! So, with a beating heart and under this gallant guidance, I started on a beautiful April morning to try my luck as an entomologist. This is not the occasion to speak of the butterflies which we successfully captured during this and the following days and nights; the expedition was a great success.

But, all the time, the hope of capturing that really substantial moth, Verlaine, was uppermost, and this is how it was realized.

As everyone knows, the broad Boulevard St. Michel runs almost due south from the Palais de Justice to the Gardens of the Luxembourg. Through the greater part of its course, it is principally (so it strikes one) composed of restaurants and brasseries, rather dull in the day-time, excessively blazing and gay at night. To the critical entomologist the eastern side of this street is known as the chief, indeed almost the only habitat of *poeta symbolans*, which, however, occurs here in vast numbers. Each of the leaders of a school has his particular café, where he is to be found at an hour and in a chair known to the *habitués* of the place. So Dryden sat at Will's and Addison at Button's, when chocolate and ratafia, I suppose, took the place of absinthe. M. Jean Moréas sits in great circumstance at the Restaurant d'Harcourt—or he did three years ago—and there I enjoyed much surprising and stimulating conversation. But Verlaine—where was he? At his café, the François-Premier, we were told that he had not been seen for four days. "There is a letter for him—he must be ill," said Madame; and we felt what the tiger-hunter feels when the tiger has gone to visit a friend in another valley. But to persist is to succeed.

The last of three days devoted to this fascinating sport had arrived. I had seen Symbolists and Decadents to my heart's content. I had learned that Victor Hugo was not a poet at all, and that M. Vielé-Griffin was a splendid bard; I had discovered that neither Victor Hugo nor M. Vielé-Griffin had a spark of talent, but that M. Charles Morice was the real Simon Pure. I had heard a great many conflicting opinions stated without hesitation and with a delightful violence; I had heard a great many verses recited which I did not understand because I was a foreigner, and could not have understood if I had been a Frenchman. I had quaffed a number of highly indigestible drinks, and had enjoyed myself very much. But I had not seen Verlaine, and poor Mr. Harland was in despair. We invited some of the poets to dine with us that night (this is the etiquette of the "Boul' Mich'") at the Restaurant d'Harcourt, and a very entertaining meal we had. M. Moréas was in the chair, and a poetess with a charming name decorated us all with sprays of the *narcissus poeticus*. I suppose that the company was what is called "a little mixed," but I am sure it was very lyrical. I had the honour of giving my arm to a most amiable lady, the Queen of Golconda, whose precise rank among the crowned heads of Europe is, I am afraid, but vaguely determined. The dinner was simple, but distinctly good; the chairman was in magnificent form, *un vrai chef d'école*, and between each of the courses somebody intoned

his own verses at the top of his voice. The windows were wide open on to the Boulevard, but there was no public expression of surprise.

It was all excessively amusing, but deep down in my consciousness, tolling like a little bell, there continued to sound the words, "We haven't seen Verlaine." I confessed as much at last to the sovereign of Golconda, and she was graciously pleased to say that she would make a great effort. She was kind enough, I believe, to send out a sort of search-party. Meanwhile, we adjourned to another café, to drink other things, and our company grew like a rolling snowball. I was losing all hope, and we were descending the Boulevard, our faces set for home ; the Queen of Golconda was hanging heavily on my arm, and having formed a flattering misconception as to my age, was warning me against the temptations of Paris, when two more poets, a male and a female, most amiably hurried to meet us with the intoxicating news that Verlaine had been seen to dart into a little place called the Café Soleil d'Or. Thither we accordingly hied, buoyed up by hope, and our party, now containing a dozen persons (all poets), rushed into an almost empty drinking-shop. But no Verlaine was to be seen. M. Moréas then collected us round a table, and fresh grenadines were ordered.

Where I sat, by the elbow of M. Moréas, I was opposite an open door, absolutely dark, leading down, by oblique stairs, to a cellar. As I idly watched this square of blackness I suddenly saw some ghostly shape fluttering at the bottom of it. It took the form of a strange bald head, bobbing close to the ground. Although it was so dim and vague, an idea crossed my mind. Not daring to speak, I touched M. Moréas, and so drew his attention to it. "Pas un mot, pas un geste, Monsieur!" he whispered, and then, instructed in the guile of his race, *insidias Danaûm*, the eminent author of "Les Cantilènes" rose, making a vague detour towards the street, and then plunged at the cellar door. There was a prolonged scuffle and a rolling down stairs ; then M. Moréas re-appeared, triumphant; behind him something flopped up out of the darkness like an owl,—a timid shambling figure in a soft black hat, with jerking hands, and it peeped with intention to disappear again. But there were cries of "Venez donc, Maître," and by-and-by Verlaine was persuaded to emerge definitely and to sit by me.

I had been prepared for strange eccentricities of garb, but he was very decently dressed ; he referred at once to the fact, and explained that this was the suit which had been bought for him to lecture in, in Belgium. He was particularly proud of a real white shirt ; "C'est ma chemise de conférence," he said, and shot out the cuffs of it with pardonable pride. He was full of his

experiences of Belgium, and in particular he said some very pretty things about Bruges and its *béguinages*, and how much he should like to spend the rest of his life there. Yet it seemed less the mediæval buildings which had attracted him than a museum of old lace. He spoke with a veiled utterance, difficult for me to follow. Not for an instant would he take off his hat, so that I could not see the Socratic dome of forehead which figures in all the caricatures. I thought his countenance very Chinese, and I may perhaps say here that when he was in London in 1894 I called him a Chinese philosopher. He replied: "Chinois—comme vous voulez, mais philosophe—non pas!"

On this first occasion (April 2, 1893), recitations were called for, and Verlaine repeated his "Clair de Lune":

> "Votre âme est un paysage choisi
> Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques
> Jouant du luth et dansant et quasi
> Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques."

He recited in a low voice, without gesticulation, very delicately. Then M. Moréas, in exactly the opposite manner, with roarings of a bull and with modulated sawings of the air with his hand, intoned an eclogue addressed by himself to Verlaine as "Tityre." And so the exciting evening closed, the passionate shepherd in question presently disappearing again down those mysterious stairs. And we, out into the soft April night and the budding smell of the trees.

EDMUND GOSSE.

II

VERLAINE IN 1894

In the spring of 1894 I received a note in English, inviting me to "coffee and cigarettes plentifully," and signed "yours quite cheerfully, Paul Verlaine." I found him in a little room at the top of a tenement house in the Rue St. Jacques, sitting in an easy chair, with his bad leg swaddled in many bandages. He asked me, and in English, for I had explained the poverty of my French, if I knew Paris well, and added, pointing to his leg, that it had "scorched" his leg, for he knew it "well, too well," and lived in it like "a fly in a pot of marmalade;" and taking up an English dictionary, one of the very few books in his room, began searching for the name of the disease, selecting, after much labour, and with, I understand, imperfect accuracy, "erysipelas." Meanwhile, his homely and middle-aged mistress, who had been busy when I came, in dusting, or in some other housewife fashion, had found the cigarettes, and made excellent coffee. She had obviously given the room most of its character: her canary birds, of which there were several cages, kept up an intermittent tumult in the open window, and her sentimental chromolithographs scattered themselves among the nude drawings, and the caricatures of himself as a monkey, which M. Verlaine had torn out of the papers and pinned against the wall. She handed me a match to light my cigarette, with the remark, in English, "A bad match, a French match," and I saw by the way her face lighted up when my reply, "They have the best matches in England, but you have the best poets," was translated to her, that she was proud of her ungainly lover. While we were drinking our coffee she drew a box towards the fire for a singular visitor, a man, who was nicknamed Louis XI., M. Verlaine explained, because of a close resemblance, and who had not shaved for a week, and kept his trousers on with a belt of string or thin rope, and wore an opera hat, which he set upon his knee, and kept shoving up and down continually while M. Verlaine talked. M. Verlaine talked of Shakespeare, whom he admired, with the reservations of his article in the "Fortnightly"; of Maeterlinck, who was "a dear good fellow," but in his work "a little bit of a mountebank"; of Hugo, who was "a volcano of mud as well as of flame," but always, though "not good enough for the young messieurs," a supreme poet; and of Villiers de l'Isle Adam, who was "exalté," but wrote "the most excellent French," and whose "Axël" he interpreted, and somewhat narrowly, as I could but think, as meaning that love

was the only important thing in the world; and of "In Memoriam," which he had tried to translate and could not, because "Tennyson was too noble, too *Anglais*, and when he should have been broken-hearted had many reminiscences."

No matter what he talked of, there was in his voice, in his face, or in his words, something of the "voluminous tenderness" which Mr. Bain has called, I believe, "the basis of all immorality," and of the joyous serenity and untroubled perception of those who commune with spiritual ideas. One felt always that he was a great temperament, the servant of a great daimon, and fancied, as one listened to his vehement sentences that his temperament, his daimon, had been made uncontrollable that he might live the life needful for its perfect expression in art, and yet escape the bonfire. To remember him is to understand the futility of writing and thinking, as we commonly do, as if the ideal world were the perfection of ours, a blossom rooted in our clay; and of being content to measure those who announce its commandments and its beauty by their obedience to our laws; and of missing the wisdom of the Hebrew saying, "He who sees Jehovah dies." The ideal world, when it opens its fountains, dissolves by its mysterious excitement in this man sanity, which is but the art of understanding the mechanical world, and in this man morality, which is but the art of living there with comfort; and, seeing this, we grow angry and forget that the Incarnation has none the less need of our reverence because it has taken place in a manger of the dim passions, or bring perhaps our frankincense and myrrh in secret, lest a little truth madden our world.

W. B. YEATS.

III

MY VISIT TO LONDON

(*November*, 1893)

On the 19th of November last, at nine in the evening, I took the train at the Gare Saint-Lazare for Dieppe-Newhaven. On reaching Dieppe, I found the buffet crammed with travellers, who had been kept by the bad weather from taking the preceding boats. The boat corresponding with my train was equally unable to put out to sea, on account of a storm which had already lasted twenty-four hours, and was to last, with redoubled violence, till the next evening. So there was nothing for it but, in company with a good hundred people, to spend part of the night on a bench, till the worthy host (to whom thanks, and thanks again!) made me the offer, not indeed of a room, but of a sofa in the dining-room of his hotel opposite the station, and I was thus enabled, if not to sleep with much comfort, at all events to take a little rest, to the accompaniment of the boom of the sea, which reminded me of the too Parisian uproar and the cannonade of September, 1870, to January, 1871. All the next day a diluvian rain fell, and I consumed the time in déjeuners, lunches, and dinners, apéritifs, coffees, and cigars, at the said buffet. Of Dieppe I saw no more than the whitish cliffs against an iron-gray sky, across the lances as of a mass of armed men—

"les lances de l'averse"—

the terrible downpour, under which the sea, gradually calming, growled like a gorged beast, still terribly, with a ravenous delight, one might have said, for many fishing-boats, alas! had gone down, and were still going down, with all hands on board, in the harbour and out at sea.

At last, on the 20th of November, at nine in the evening, there was some talk of setting out, and, hobbling along as fast as I could, I managed to secure half a berth in the second-class cabin. When the bell had sounded for the last time, and the great white chimney, like a vast phantom in the opaque night, had uttered its lugubrious shriek, I felt, after some minutes of uneasy motion in port, a prodigious pitching of the vessel, then a quite sufficient rolling, stupefying at first by their continuity and their almost rhythmical regularity, and becoming a literal rocking to sleep, at least as far as I was

concerned, fatigued as I already was by a sleepless night, or all but, and a day of interminable boredom. And there was something, too, in the immensity of the "caress," not unpleasing to a poet, and I made a little poem about it not long afterwards, which is to appear some day in an English paper.[1] Anyway, I slept the sleep of the just during the whole passage, and never opened my eyes till within sight of Newhaven, when, the sea being now quite calm, the boat glided along without needing to turn on steam, and the very lull and comparative silence awoke me as pleasantly as possible. When I reached London at two in the morning, and had a quarter of an hour's drive to the Temple, in the fine moonlight, the wind quite bracing, I felt already the good effect of what was really one of the best crossings I had ever had. London, so impressive as one passes its superb buildings from the formidable Thames towards Westminster, the rich, elegant London between Victoria Station and the Strand, seemed to me that night exquisite, delicate, almost dainty—luminous.

At the Temple awaited me the poet Arthur Symons, who (as, afterwards, Herbert Horne, poet himself, and architect) was to give me a charming hospitality. He had been to look for me three or four times in vain at Victoria Station, and, imagining after these fruitless errands that I should not come till night, he had waited up for me, and came to welcome me at the very door of the house which he inhabits in that vast caravanserai of the Law—and of Silence. (For how exquisite a corner of London, in which there are so many exquisite and infamous corners, so few common or vulgar!) My host led me up into his charming little flat, from which, next day, I was to have one of the most ravishing and peaceful views, in the exceptionally fine weather, as if made on purpose for the traveller, which bathed the London sky and the whole aspect of the immense city of pale rose and pearl gray. Blithe birds, blackbirds even, on the infinitely twisted branches of those beautiful, immense English trees; to the left, in a paved and grassy angle, regular to the point of being beautiful, in its way, the fountain, which gives its name to the spot (Fountain Court), with its babbling jet of water. But for the moment I was hungry, fagged out by those hours of vehement sea; and Symons, following my example, ate—while we talked, for two good hours, about everything under the sun, Paris, poetry, money too (poets think of nothing else . . . and with reason!), my future lectures—an entire box, one of those long, tall, tin boxes, of tea-biscuits, "muffins" in English,[2] washed down with plenty of "gin and

[1] It appeared in the "New Review."—ED. "Savoy."

[2] They were Osborne biscuits.—ED. "Savoy."

soda,"[1] and perfumed with vague cigarettes. And it was, I assure you, one of the best and gayest meals I ever had in my life!

But I had not come to London merely as a tourist. The very date of my arrival is sufficient evidence to the contrary. I had to give two *conférences*, or rather two *lectures*, as they say, more justly, more simply, and more modestly, in English: one at London, the other, on the following day, at Oxford. The London one was to take place next day (or rather the very day of my archi-matutinal arrival) at 8.30 P.M., at a hall in Holborn, of which I shall have something to say in a few moments.

Our conversation, much against our will, finally came to an end, in spite of its twofold interest, intellectual and gastronomic, for "the Sandman," as Hoffmann says, "Madame la Poussière," as they say in my mother's country, Arras, to represent sleep, had passed, and a well-deserved repose parted us until eleven, when the very sympathetic journalist, Mr. Edmund Gosse, came to take us out to lunch in a sumptuous restaurant near by, where my forces were sufficiently recuperated to enable me to put the finishing touches to my *causerie* for the evening. I say nothing of many other visits, among which I remember those of William Heinemann, the great publisher, Horne, Rothenstein, whom I had met the summer before, and who had sketched, in the Hôpital Broussais, a portrait of me which has since appeared in the "Pall Mall Budget," Lane, the publisher of "les Jeunes," and others whose names I forget.

The evening came, and our little band, after a dinner *à la française*, not less copious than the morning's lunch, set out, in a confusion of vehicles, towards the spot where I was to speak of "Contemporary French Poets." It was, as I have said, in Holborn, the long, immemorial street of the venerable capital. I knew London long since, and I remembered to have seen, in Holborn, almost at the intersection formed by the Viaduct, a row of some dozen houses, as picturesque as could be, and extremely old, dating from at least the time of Elizabeth. I was not so very much surprised, guided as I was by artists and poets, to find myself, after passing through indefinite corridors, in an extraordinary hall, very ancient, of a sort of rustic Gothic—there is a little too much Gothic among our neighbours (and yet even their modern Gothic is so charming!) as, among us, there is an outrageous deal too much Roman, and what not! in architecture—but the Gothic of Barnard's Inn is sincere, *natural*, and marvellous in its simplicity. There is some talk of pulling down this intimate remnant of the end of the Middle Ages. (Barnard's

[1] There was no soda.—ED. "Savoy."

Inn formerly served for corporative meetings and ceremonies.) In our days the hall is used for private exhibitions, and the artists protest vigorously against this act of vandalism. If the voice of a humble stranger can be heard in this most reasonable hue and cry, here is mine, and loudly.

In front of me was a platform, where, behind a bare table of oak, lit by an old bronze lamp, rose an armchair of oak, also bare, and of colossal proportions, in which there was room enough for even the ventripotent syndics of old "merry England."

I, "chétif trouvère de Paris," intimidated by the imposing place, and the rude, majestic furniture, but encouraged by the numerous and very select audience, installed myself as best I could in the immense chair, at the immense table, and unfolding a roll of notes, expressed myself much as follows:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I should be unworthy of the title of poet—of the glorious, and sorrowful, and thereby the more glorious, name of poet—if I were to forget that I speak here in the country which is *par excellence* that of poetry. Some acquaintance (alas! but imperfect), with your language, and necessarily incomplete readings in that language, have taught me modesty, Frenchman as I am—and modesty is not specially the portion of us Frenchmen—in regard to this as to many other truths. Thus it is not without timidity that I ask for the indulgence of this picked audience.

"Nevertheless I shall venture, since I have been so graciously invited, to attempt here the most difficult of all endeavours, and, asking forgiveness for not doing it in English, the English which a great writer of ours, Barbey d'Aurévilly, declared was evidently the idiom spoken at the beginning of the world by our grandmother Eve, I begin.

"I am not wanting in experience of lectures. Last year I went to Holland and to Belgium, where I met with some success. Quite lately I visited Nancy and Lunéville, and I was touched at receiving so warm a welcome from my compatriots, for I belong to that part of the country, I was born at Metz, and it was here in London, in 1872, that I declared for the French nationality.

"But under the present circumstances, I cannot repeat too often, I experience a quite special kind of emotion, and I would specially ask your kind attention.

"May I merit it!

"I shall speak, too, during these few moments, so flattering and so formidable for me, of things of which I have some knowledge, for I have

taken part in them to the best of my ability. I allude to contemporary French poetry.

"I do not intend, be assured, to recapitulate the whole history of the poetic evolution of the present time: Romanticism, the *Parnasse contemporain*, itself an output of Romanticism, an advanced Romanticism in which thundered the formidable verse of Leconte de Lisle, flickered and tinkled that of Théodore de Banville, while that of Baudelaire sighed and shone like a corpse-candle—revered and venerated trinity, from whom, undoubtedly, proceeded the first works of a generation already ripe, very ripe, too ripe, think and say some impatient ones among us; a generation to which I belong, to which Stéphane Mallarmé belongs, and others also, whose talent has retained the impress of the past, not without some necessary modifications (doubtless for the better) which time brings with it in its passing.

"I give here only the name of Mallarmé, who, along with myself, was most in sympathy with those younger men about whom I intend to speak. It was about the year 1881 that the various tendencies of the new 'batch' of poets began to make themselves felt, tendencies confirmed by a most often happy audacity, and a true love of letters. I do not always agree with them; I should raise many objections to the *vers libre*, for example, and the *rime libre*, preached and practised by these latest friends of mine. But what merits, already, and rightly, noised abroad, are there not in Jean Moréas in particular, at once the courageous, the indefatigable critic, and the protagonist of his work, still constantly under discussion, so to speak. It was at first pure Romanticism, without a shadow of resemblance to the *Parnasse contemporain*, then it adopted Symbolism, in whose definition of itself he was not slow to recognize the insufficiency, and which he replaced by the *École Romane*, gathering about him, with a well-merited pride, men of such fine talents, original within even the limits of the accepted poetic discipline, as Ernest Raynaud, Maurice du Plessys, and, more recently, Raymond de la Tailhède.

"In addition to the 'Romans,' for, in spite of all, the name has had to be recognized, there is an independent *pléiade* of poets, powerful or charming, each seeking a way of his own, and the most having found it; some fervent adepts, others sceptical partisans, it would seem, of that *vers libre* which, once and for all, I am by no means too fond of. Others, again, hold by verse pure and simple, verse as I have known and used it, with yet others who are legion.

"Undoubtedly the most remarkable among these is Laurent Tailhade, at once subtle and mystical, and so terribly and so stingingly *méchant*. It is

certainly well to be among his friends; as for his literary enemies, they can be but the foolish or the ignorant. I am infinitely fond of his books of pure beauty, but I confess I have a weakness for *Au Pays du Mufle*, which might be rendered in English, imperfectly enough, by *In the Country of the Snob:* that formidable farrago of violence and of irony, in which the ferocity of the subject-matter corresponds, in some sort, with a certain ferocity of the form, a form at once learned and amusing, furiously yet quite intelligibly archaic. Next follow Paul Vérola; Henri de Régnier; Vielé-Griffin, Stuart Merrill, both of Anglo-Saxon origin, but brought up mainly in France; Adolphe Retté; Edouard Dubus; George Suzanne; Dauphin Meunier; all remarkable in their different degrees, and of an assured future. I am not mentioning names at random, be sure, for, if I desired to be interminable, I easily could be, so many young poets are there in these days of surrounding materialism and rationalism, whose extent, however, is perhaps somewhat exaggerated. Many of these will renounce the fray, and honourably re-enter the ordinary intellectual life. As for those I have named, never! and so much the better for all of us.

"These poets, I repeat, are independent of one another. The 'Romans,' of whom I have just spoken, form, on the contrary, a group to themselves, and, whatever may be the very real originality, on which I have but now insisted, of one and another among them, taken separately, they follow a common principle, which is, to go straight back to the origin of the French language, which, it is well known, comes of Gallo-Roman stock. But is 'Roman' really the word? I doubt it; indeed, I deny it. The Roman is still Latin, liturgical Latin, in my opinion, of the time of the Roman basilicas; and I do not quite understand, on the part of the poets in question, the leap from this time to that of Ronsard, whose idiom, whose rhythm, whose very tricks, are a good deal too much borrowed by these amiable, and, at their moments, admirable poets. They have science (a little at random, for they are young); they have music, or at least almost all the four who form the group; they have faith, and, above all, good faith. They have all that, I admit willingly, gladly, indeed, on behalf of my art which they honour, my country which they adorn; but, but, though that is enough to be or to become a perfect artist, is it enough to become an incontestable poet? Perhaps not; unkind as it may seem to suggest the doubt.

"But life is hard, as it is essentially uncertain, obscure, indecisive, complex; and again charming, smiling, friendly, simple, when it wills. And in order to be a poet, it seems to me, one must live much, and remember much. Alfred

de Musset has said that infinitely better than I could possibly say it, and he has left a living work, the typical living work, though, indeed, he has not put all of himself into it. He had his reasons, which were, in the main, that he chose to do as he did; but he might, perhaps he should, have done more. In spite of all, he remains a great poet. An artist? yes, a hundred times, yes. A perfect artist? No; for life, felt and rendered, even well, even admirably felt and rendered, is not all which that task requires. You must work, you must work like a labourer; and that these 'Roman' poets undoubtedly do.

"So, it seems to me, the poet should be absolutely sincere, but absolutely conscientious as a writer; hiding nothing of himself, but employing, in the expression of this frankness, all needful dignity, and a care of that dignity which should manifest itself in, if not the perfection of form, at all events an invisible, insensible, but effective endeavour after this lofty and severe quality; I was about to say, this virtue.

"A poet (alas! only myself) has essayed this undertaking; very probably he has failed, but certainly he has done his best to acquit himself honourably.

"I began, in 1867, with 'Poèmes Saturniens,' a youthful affair, marked by imitations to right and left: Hugo, Gautier, Baudelaire, Banville. In addition, thanks to a mistaken taste for Leconte de Lisle, I was an *impassible*, 'im-pas-si-ble,' as the word was pronounced then in the Passage Choiseul and on the Boulevard des Batignolles.

> "'Pauvre gens! l'Art n'est pas d'éparpiller son âme:
> Est-elle en marbre ou non, la Vénus de Milo?'

I exclaimed, in an epilogue that I considered for some time as the cream of æsthetics; and I added, in a sonnet which was excluded from this first collection through lack of space rather than lack of taste, that the only just and great man is he who

> 'S'éternise dans un égoisme de marbre.'

This verse, I may remark in parentheses, is one of my first, if not the very first, in this form. I was to go to much greater lengths in these audacities. Others outstep me: why should I cry halt to them? I shall never cease to say, and to say again and again: I applaud, but for my part I hold back, and I applaud, even, with reservation. Sometimes I am inclined to reproach myself with having let loose the storm, but it is too late for me to oppose it now. A *Quos ego* on my part would seem ridiculous, and I am now but the old seaman, a little weary, but never tired of heroism ('Comme un buffle se câbre, aspirant la tempête,' Stéphane Mallarmé, my old comrade in dangers, has

written superbly), who assists, just a little sceptical, but imperceptibly, imperturbably, at the efforts of younger 'Jack Tars,' to whom I wish good luck and the happiness of seeing them return victorious from the fray.

"*Paulo minora canamus.* I return to myself and my *débuts.* At present the verses quoted above, and the theories attached to them, seem to me puerile; decent enough as verse, and thereby the more puerile.

"However, the man who lived beneath the very young, the somewhat pedantical young man, whom I then was, sometimes, indeed often, lifted the mask, and expressed himself in various little poems, not without tenderness, such as:

'MON RÊVE FAMILIER

'Je fais souvent ce rêve étrange et pénétrant
D'une femme inconnue, et que j'aime, et qui m'aime,
Et qui n'est, chaque fois, ni tout à fait la même
Ni tout à fait une autre, et m'aime et me comprend.

'Car elle me comprend, et mon cœur, transparent
Pour elle seule, hélas! cesse d'être un problème
Pour elle seule, et les moiteurs de mon front blême
Elle seule les sait rafraîchir, en pleurant.

'Est-elle brune, blonde ou rousse?—Je l'ignore.
Son nom? Je me souviens qu'il est doux et sonore
Comme ceux des aimés que la Vie exila.

'Son regard est pareil au regard des statues,
Et, pour sa voix, lointaine, et calme, et grave, elle a
L'inflexion des voix chères qui se sont tues.'

'CHANSON D'AUTOMNE

'Les sanglots longs
Des violons
De l'automne
Blessent mon cœur
D'une langueur
Monotone.

'Tout suffocant
Et blême quand
Sonne l'heure,
Je me souviens
Des jours anciens
Et je pleure;

'Et je m'en vais
Au vent mauvais
  Qui m'emporte
De ça, de là,
Pareil à la
  Feuille morte.'

"These verses, among many others, gave evidence of a certain inclination towards a half-sensual, half-dreamy melancholy, confirmed, a year later, more agreeably, perhaps, in any case with more mastery and more deliberate intention, by the verses (costumed after the personages of the Italian comedy and the fancy pieces of Watteau) contained in the little volume, not badly received from the first, the 'Fêtes Galantes.' It is not difficult to find among these some piquant notes of velvety sharpness and of sly malice.

'CRÉPUSCULE DU SOIR

'Les hauts talons luttaient avec les longues jupes,
En sorte que, selon le terrain et le vent,
Parfois luisaient des bas de jambe, trop souvent
Interceptés !—et nous aimions ce jeu de dupes.

'Parfois aussi le dard d'un insecte jaloux
Inquiétait le col des belles sous les branches,
Et c'étaient des éclairs soudains de nuques blanches
Et ce régal comblait nos jeunes yeux de fous.

'Le soir tombait, un soir équivoque d'automne :
Les belles, se pendant rêveuses à nos bras
Dirent alors des mots si spécieux, tout bas,
Que notre âme depuis ce temps tremble et s'étonne."

'LE FAUNE

'Un vieux faune de terre cuite
Rit au centre des boulingrins,
Présageant sans doute une fuite
Mauvaise à ces instants sereins

'Qui m'ont conduit et t'ont conduite,
Mélancholiques pélerins,
Jusqu'à cette heure dont la fuite
Tournoie au son des tambourins.'

"A quite other music is heard in 'La Bonne Chanson,' really a wedding-present, literally speaking, for the tiny volume appeared on the occasion of a marriage which was going to take place, and which took place in 1870. The

author values it as perhaps the most *natural* of his works. Indeed, it was Art, violent or delicate, which had affected to reign, almost exclusively, in his former works, and it was only from then that it was possible to trace in him true and simple views concerning nature, physical and moral.

'SÉRÉNADE

'La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois ;
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée . . .

O bien-aimée.

'L'étang reflète,
Profond miroir,
La silhouette
De saule noir
Où le vent pleure . . .

Rêvons, c'est l'heure.

'Un vaste et tendre
Apaisement
Semble descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise . . .

C'est l'heure exquise.'

"Life had its way, and distress soon came, not without his own fault, to the household of the poet, who suddenly threw up everything, and went wandering in search of unsatisfying distractions. On the other hand, I will not say remorse (he did not experience it, for he repented of nothing), but vexation and regret, with certain consolations, compensations rather, inspired him in his third collection, 'Romances sans Paroles,' thus named in order to express the *real* vagueness and the want of precise meaning which were part of his intention.

'SPLEEN

'O triste, triste était mon âme
A cause, à cause d'une femme.

'Je ne me suis pas consolé,
Bien que mon cœur s'en soit allé,

'Bien que mon cœur, bien que mon âme
Eussent fui loin de cette femme.

'Je ne me suis pas consolé,
Bien que mon cœur s'en soit allé.

'Et mon cœur, mon cœur trop sensible
Dit à mon âme : Est-il possible,

'Est-il possible,—le fût-il,—
Ce fier exil, ce triste exil ?

'Mon âme dit à mon cœur : Sais-je
Moi-même que nous veut ce piège

'D'être présents bien qu'exilés,
Encore que loin en allés ?'

'GREEN

'Voici des fruits, des fleurs, des feuilles et des branches,
Et puis voici mon cœur, qui ne bat que pour vous :
Ne le déchirez pas avec vos deux mains blanches
Et qu'à vos yeux si beaux l'humble présent soit doux.

'J'arrive tout couvert encore de rosée
Que le vent du matin vient glacer à mon front.
Souffrez que ma fatigue, à vos pieds reposée,
Rêve des chers instants qui la délasseront.

'Sur votre jeune sein laisser rouler ma tête
Toute sonore encor de vos derniers baisers ;
Laissez-la s'apaiser de la bonne tempête,
Et que je dorme un peu puisque vous reposez.'

"A serious catastrophe interrupted these factitious pains and pleasures. He exaggerated it indeed to the point of writing these lines :

'Un grand sommeil noir
Tombe sur ma vie :
Dormez, tout espoir,
Dormez, toute envie.

'Je ne sais plus rien,
Je perds la mémoire
Du mal et du bien . . .
O la triste histoire !

'Je suis un berceau
Qu'une main balance
Au creux d'un caveau :
Silence, silence !'

"Then a divine resignation (still, to his thinking, divine) came over him, and inspired in him many mystical poems of the purest Catholicism, such as this, which marks a new era in poetry, and may stand for the motto of his life during many years :

'Beauté des femmes, leur faiblesse, et ces mains pâles
Qui font souvent le bien et peuvent tout le mal,
Et ces yeux, où plus rien ne reste d'animal
Que juste assez pour dire : 'assez' aux fureurs mâles,

'Et toujours, maternelle endormeuses des râles,
Même quand elle ment, cette voix ! Matinal
Appel, ou chant bien doux à vêpre, ou frais signal,
Ou beau sanglot qui va mourir au pli des châles ! . . .

'Hommes durs ! Vie atroce et laide d'ici-bas !
Ah ! que du moins, loin des baisers et des combats,
Quelque chose demeure un peu sur la montagne,

'Quelque chose du cœur enfantin et subtil,
Bonté, respect ! Car qu'est-ce qui nous accompagne,
Et vraiment, quand la mort viendra, que reste-t-il ?'

'Ecoutez la chanson bien douce
Qui ne pleure que pour vous plaire.
Elle est discrète, elle est legère :
Un frisson d'eau sur de la mousse !

'La voix vous fut connue (et chère ?),
Mais à présent elle est voilée
Comme une veuve désolée,
Pourtant comme elle encore fière ;

'Et, dans les longs plis de son voile
Qui palpite au brises d'automne,
Cache et montre au cœur qui s'étonne
La verité comme une étoile.

'Elle dit, la voix reconnue,
Que la bonté c'est notre vie,
Que de la haine et de l'envie
Rien ne reste, la mort venue.

'Elle parle aussi de la gloire
D'être simple sans plus attendre.
Et de noces d'or et du tendre
Bonheur d'une paix sans victoire.

'Accueillez la voix qui persiste
Dans son naïf epithalame.
Allez, rien n'est meilleur à l'âme
Que de faire une âme moins triste !

'Elle est en peine et de passage,
L'âme qui souffre sans colère,
Et comme sa morale est claire ! . . . .
Ecoutez la chanson bien sage.'

"Then, weary of men and women, of their baseness and frailty, and weary of himself, the poet turned to God :

'O mon Dieu, vous m'avez blessé d'amour
Et la blessure est encor vibrante,
O mon Dieu, vous m'avez blessé d'amour.

'O mon Dieu, votre crainte m'a frappé,
Et la brûlure est encor là qui tonne,
O mon Dieu, votre crainte m'a frappé.

'O mon Dieu, j'ai connu que tout est vil
Et votre gloire en moi s'est installée,
O mon Dieu, j'ai connu que tout est vil.

'Noyez mon âme aux flots de votre Vin,
Fondez ma vie au Pain de votre table,
Noyez mon cœur aux flots de votre Vin.

'Voici mon sang que je n'ai pas versé,
Voici ma chair indigne de souffrance,
Voici mon sang que je n'ai pas versé.

'Voici mon front qui n'a pu que rougir,
Pour l'escabeau de vos pieds adorables,
Voici mon front qui n'a pu que rougir.

'Voici mes mains qui n'ont pas travaillé,
Pour les charbons ardents et l'encens rare [1]
Voici mes mains qui n'ont pas travaillé.

'Voici mon cœur qui n'a battu qu'en vain,
Pour palpiter aux ronces du Calvaire,
Voici mon cœur qui n'a battu qu'en vain.

'Voici mes pieds, frivoles voyageurs,
Pour accourir au cri de votre grâce,
Voici mes pieds, frivoles voyageurs.

'Voici ma voix, bruit maussade et menteur,
Pour les reproches de la Pénitence,
Voici ma voix, bruit maussade et menteur.

[1] "Ascendit fumus aromatum in conspectu Domini de manu angeli."

'Voici mes yeux, luminaires d'erreur,
Pour être éteints aux pleurs de la prière,
Voici mes yeux, luminaires d'erreur.

'Hélas ! Vous, Dieu d'offrande et de pardon,
Quel est le puits de mon ingratitude,
Hélas ! Vous, Dieu d'offrande et de pardon,

'Dieu de terreur et Dieu de sainteté,
Hélas ! ce noir abîme de mon crime,
Dieu de terreur et Dieu de sainteté,

'Vous, Dieu de paix, de joie et de bonheur,
Toutes mes peurs, toutes mes ignorances,
Vous Dieu de paix, de joie et de bonheur,

'Vous connaissez tout cela, tout cela,
Et que je suis plus pauvre que personne,
Vous connaissez tout cela, tout cela,

'Mais ce que j'ai, mon Dieu, je vous le donne.'

(*Stickney*, 1875.)

"Then, as it was bound to happen, overstrained humanity resumed, or seemed to resume, its rights, or its fancied rights; whence a series of volumes, 'Chansons pour Elle,' 'Odes en son Honneur,' 'Élégies,' in which the new affections were celebrated in appropriate measures. Trouble returned under other forms: there are so many, and the sharpest of them all is sickness. It was under this dominion that the poet made a certain return upon himself, and, putting an end or a pause to his recent lucubrations, resumed at times the sadness and serenity of 'Sagesse,' 'Amour,' and 'Bonheur,' not without an echo, but a rigorously diminished echo, of the sinful chants of 'Parallèlement,' the most sensual, the most reprehensible, if you will, of his books. Here is a last poem, which, at all events, will carry me somewhat further back towards the 'Fêtes Galantes' (and then I shall have the honour of thanking you for your gracious attention), though my next volume, 'Varia,' shortly to appear, will give evidence rather of the philosophic and serious side of what people are pleased to term my talent:

'IMPRESSION DE PRINTEMPS

'Il est des jours, avez vous remarqué?
Où l'on se sent plus léger qu'un oiseau,
Plus jeune qu'un enfant, et vrai, plus gai
Que la même gaieté d'un damoiseau.

'On se souvient sans bien se rappeler . . .
Evidemment l'on rêve et non pourtant.
L'on semble nager et l'on croirait voler.
L'on aime ardemment sans aimer cependant,

'Tant est léger le cœur sous le ciel clair
Et tant l'on va, sûr de soi, plein de foi
Dans les autres que l'on trompe avec l'air
D'être plutôt trompé gentiment, soi.

'La vie est bonne et l'on voudrait mourir
Bien que n'ayant pas peur du lendemain.
Un désir indécis s'en vient fleurir,
Dirait-on, au coeur plus et moins qu'humain.

'Hélas ! faut-il que meure ce bonheur?
Meurent plutôt la vie et son tourment !
O dieux cléments, gardez-moi du malheur
D'à jamais perdre un moment si charmant.'

(*May*, 1893.)

"Since the course of my causerie, and the tone of its development, have led me to end with these lines:

'O dieux cléments, gardez-moi du malheur
D'à jamais perdre un moment si charmant,'

I take the opportunity of making them the transition to my 'last word,' or rather of ending with them. Thanks, then, once more, ladies and gentlemen, for the delicious hour in which I have felt your sympathy about me, as I have spoken of my own country in a country I so greatly love and admire, of things and men dear and precious to me; thanks for the attention you have given to the words of a guest, for whom this evening will remain memorable and honourable among all the hours of a life which has all been devoted to the cause of letters."

The English press, both London and provincial, was, on the whole, favourable to me, and I would here offer my best "shake-hand" to the staff of many papers, particularly the "Times," the "Pall Mall Gazette," the "Star" (which, I may add in parentheses, has published a portrait of me in which I trace more resemblance to my friend the excellent Breton poet, Le Goffic), the "St. James's Gazette," the "Liverpool Post," the "Manchester Guardian," the "Sketch," etc., to all of which my warmest gratitude is due. Certain articles, intended to give more precise information, require perhaps a few corrections. But what difference will any contradictions, any improbablities, on my account, puzzling to posterity as they are likely to be, what harm will they

do to my good or bad reputation a thousand years from now? What real harm?

Next day I was off to Oxford, where I lunched with my friend Rothenstein, in company with the distinguished professor, York Powell, and a French poet, M. Bonnier, long since settled in England, an ideal companion, full of stories and recollections. Then, with the aid of hansoms, we were able to see some of the town, deliciously dainty, almost rustic, in its commercial quarters, tiny shops as it were illuminated with cheap confectionaries, and goods of popular sorts, sweets for little people and little purses; sweet little houses, little gardens full of rest, trees showing their last red leaves above the red, comfortable, flat roofs, somewhat like the proper and modest little streets of Boston, of which I have spoken in another paper; and unique in its mediæval majesty, its buildings, colleges, churches, of the *good period* (I refer neither to our century, nor to the two centuries and a half before it).

My lecture took place in a hall, situated at the end of a labyrinth of rooms crammed with books, an ancient hall, with an arched roof of stone and wood, severely furnished, where, under the presidency of Professor Powell, I gave once more, with such change as the place demanded, the lecture which I had given the previous night, before an audience mainly of students, most of them in the historic dress of the university, a black robe, short or long, according to the "degree," and completed, out of doors, by the traditional flat square cap, which gives to them, as to their professors, a half clerical, half magisterial air, well in keeping with those faces, grave with the majesty of young or matured learning, and all friendly and welcoming with smile or greeting.

On my return to London, I spent a few days in seeing the city which I once knew so well, and which I found, at all events in its purely "continental" quarter, much changed, and much to its advantage, from the point of view, somewhat narrow perhaps, of an old Parisian; and all this did but increase my long and profoundly felt sympathy for a city which I have praised so often for its force, its splendour, its infinite charm, too, in fine weather and foul, and which I am forced, in all good faith, to praise now for its charm of the moment, and a limitless hospitality, the understanding of tastes, the forgiveness of shortcomings, the appreciation of merits, of defects even: I do but speak, be sure, of elegant, *respectable* defects.

Early in December I set out for Manchester, leaving by the admirable station of St. Pancras, all brick, marble, pointed arches and bell-towers, which

was in course of building at the time of my first visit to London in 1873: 1873 to 1894, a good age for an "old dog!"

This town, proverbially a business town, black and splendid, a larger Lyons, struck me as being all swathed in smoke, with open promenades by the side of a very low-lying river. I only saw Salford, which forms half of the rival of Liverpool, and my visit, as at Oxford, only lasted twenty-four hours. I was received by Mr. Theodore C. London, a young clergyman of the Congregational Church, and by his sister and brother, a lad of eighteen or nineteen, all more friendly one than another. A friend of Mr. London, a charming young man, professor at the Grammar School, M. Emile Bally, a Swiss from Geneva, who, naturally, spoke French as his mother tongue, and English with absolute perfection, came to see us during the day. Both were steeped in literature to the finger-tips, and ardent admirers of poetry, and it was they who looked after the lecture which I had been invited to give. I had a most sympathetic audience for my speechifying, which was similar to those I had already given. I was well aware that Manchester, apart from its immense industrial importance, formed an important intellectual and artistic centre. If I had had the time, I should have made some endeavour to get a sight of a large picture which had attracted deserved attention at the Salon of 1872. The picture was signed Fantin-Latour; the title, "Coin de Table"; the persons, Léon Valade, Camille Pelletan, Ernest d'Hervilly, Jean Aicard, Arthur Rimbaud,—and your humble servant.

Then, all too soon, the time came for me to leave England, and, after some days of delightful dawdling through a London of theatres (a very fairy-land!), music-halls (a very paradise!), of good and excellent visits received and returned; after having shaken so many really friendly hands, William Heinemann, William Rothenstein, A. Symons, H. Horne, H. Harland, E. Gosse, Image, Lane, Frank Harris, the sympathetic editor of the "Fortnightly," I embarked once more, this time on a sea as still as glass, happy, certainly, at the thought of seeing France again, but very happy, too, at the thought of so agreeable a visit and of such good and enduring memories!

PAUL VERLAINE.

(*Translated by Arthur Symons.*)

The Dive

A Lithograph by

Charles H. Shannon

THE LOVE OF THE POOR

PERSONAGES.

THE OLD MAN.
THE OLD WOMAN.
THE SOUL OF THEIR DEAD CHILD.

SCENE.—*The interior of a small cottage, almost devoid of furniture. Two chairs drawn up to a fireless grate. Time: twilight.*

THE OLD WOMAN *enters, walking feebly, carrying a few twigs.*

The Old Woman.

FAR, far have I wandered in my search for wood.
My arms are stiff, my eyes are dim
From cold and want of food.
But soon dear God will give us help,
I know that God is good.

The Soul of the Dead Child. Yes, God is good.

The Old Woman. My foolish brain seems all to reel,

And voices murmur in my head;
I could have sworn to baby's voice,
And yet I know our babe is dead.

The Soul. Yes, mother, she is dead.

The Old Woman. 'Tis strange how lately when my heart has failed,
When life has seemed too hard for folks like me,
A little voice has murmured in my ear,
And whispered comfort for the days to be.

The Soul. Yes, comfort for the days to be;
Such joys as you have never known,
The songs of all the angel choir,
The sight of God upon His throne.

The Old Woman. I know we must not hope for joys in heaven,
To whom on earth no room to live is given.
If God will grant me but His leave to rest.

The Soul. God will bestow whatever He thinks best.

THE OLD MAN *totters into the room.*

The Old Man. My dear, they mocked me in the village street,
The little boys threw stones and dogged my feet,
The baker laughed, and turned me from his door.

The Soul. So shall God turn Him from his cry for grace.

The Old Man. There was no soul would give me resting-place.

The Old Woman. Then we must die, dear heart,
And hand in hand
Seek out the passage to the pleasant land.
As we have lived and toiled, so let us die.
I could not close my weary eyes,
Unless I knew you by.

The Old Man. [*Sits down, and supporting his head with both hands, speaks in a shrill, weak voice, smiling.*] I mind me, wife, when we were young
And green and fresh as yonder hills,
The fields and woods we strolled among
Knew more of grief and human ills
Than we poor children dreamed or knew,
When you loved me and I loved you.

The Old Woman. [*Sitting likewise, and smiling to herself.*] Do you mind,
James, of one brave day you kissed me in the wheat?

I was afraid the folks would guess, as I walked up the street.
I felt a trembling in my voice, a glistening in my eyes.

The Old Man. I never yet had kissed a maid who showed such sweet surprise.

And do you mind this little house, when I brought you home that day
They made us one within the church, and sent us on our way?

The Old Woman. The honeysuckle was in bloom about the cottage door.
Ah! it was fine to be in love, we cared not we were poor.

The Old Man. I bring to mind we knelt that night, and prayed dear God to bless;
And as we knelt and prayed to Him, we wept for happiness.

The Old Woman. Ah! husband mine, we were so young, how could such children tell
God has no time to save the rich and love the poor as well?
Such sinful, humble folk as we, and of such little store,
It were but vain and proud to think God could recall us more.

The Soul. As lilies shining in the woods at night,
As diamonds glittering in a crown,
More radiant and more full of light,
When God shall bring the mighty down,
And set the humble in their place,
The suffering poor shall know His grace.

The Old Man. [*Passing his hands over his eyes, and staring doubtfully about the room.*] I hear a voice that thrills with love,
A voice like the voice of a child——

The Old Woman. A voice like the voice of our child.
But she is an angel singing above—

[*Bursting into tears.*

My arms that ache with longing,
My eyes that are lost in tears.
Oh! child, my child, come back to me,
Give me the love you loved with me,
Give back the happy years.

The Old Man. Hush, hush, my wife, we must obey God's will.
We know our little child is happier on His breast.
Think, think, my dear, if she were with us still,
She would be hungry, too. Yes, wife, God's ways are best.
He knows that we can bear the hunger and the cold;

For patience comes with poverty, as comfort to the old.

The Old Woman. [*Still weeping softly.*] The days were never long to me,
when she played at my feet;
The food was never poor to me, while I could see her eat;
The pains seemed never hard to me that brought her from the womb;
But life is long and poor and hard since she is in the tomb.

The Soul. Courage, mother, courage, father, God is on your side:
Seek for help, and seek it bravely, He shall be your guide.

The Old Man. A voice within me whispers, "Courage, try again."
The world is cruel, but not so cruel as to delight in pain.
I will tell of our hunger, our age, our empty grate,
Wife, the world shall bring you help before it is too late.

[*He gets up, lays his hand comfortingly on her shoulder, and goes out. The room slowly darkens. The old woman remains sitting motionless, sometimes stretching out her hands towards the grate, as though to warm them.*

The Old Woman. My head swims, my heart pants, my hands are cramped with cold.
Will one be warm and young in heaven, or always poor and old?
I am tired, tired of life, and the misery that remains;
Tired of the many struggles, tired of the many pains.

[*Her head falls forward on her breast, and she seems to sleep. The* SOUL OF THE DEAD CHILD *comes forward, a shadowy figure swathed in gray, and kisses her on the forehead. Then there passes slowly through the room the vision of a woman holding to her breast a young child. The child claps its hands, and laughs.*

The Old Woman. [*Holding out her arms.*] Baby, dear, I see you, baby, come to me.
Baby, mother calls you, calls you to her knee.

[*The vision passes slowly towards her. The* OLD WOMAN *laughs, and, clasping her arms to her breast, rocks backwards and forwards, and sings in a quavering voice.*

Down a down, down a down,
Sleep, sleepy head.
White satin gown
For baby's warm bed.
Down a down, down a down,

Wake sleepy eyes,
Red satin gown
For baby's surprise.

[*The vision passes slowly away. The* SOUL OF THE DEAD CHILD *once more appears, and kisses the* OLD WOMAN *on the forehead.*

The Old Woman. [*Raising her head with a start.*] Oh! how happily I dreamed.
Baby nestled to my breast;
All my pain and weakness seemed
Turned to happiness and rest.

The OLD MAN *comes in very slowly, and going up to the* OLD WOMAN *takes her hand in his.*

The Old Man. My dear, I cast aside our pride, my pride and the pride of my wife,
The pride of honest workers, honest workers all our life.
I went to the workhouse master, and I stood before his door,
I said to him, I am old and ill, my wife and I are poor,
We have toiled and saved for many years, and saved and toiled again,
But cruel times and want of work have made our toil in vain.
We have no fire within our grate, no food within our door,
And I have come to beg the last sad refuge of the poor.

[*He pauses, and covers his face with his hands.*

But he said, I cannot take you both, together you cannot be,
She must go to the women's ward, and you must remain with me.

[*He throws his arms round her, and breaks into weak, tremulous sobs.*

And I must leave you, oh, my wife!
Through all this weary, toiling life,
By night and day, and day and night,
You were my joy, my one delight.
As children, hid among the wheat,
We kissed, and whispered, love was sweet;
As bride and bridegroom in our bed,
We thanked our God that we were wed:
We heard our little girl's first cry,
And in my arms you watched her die;

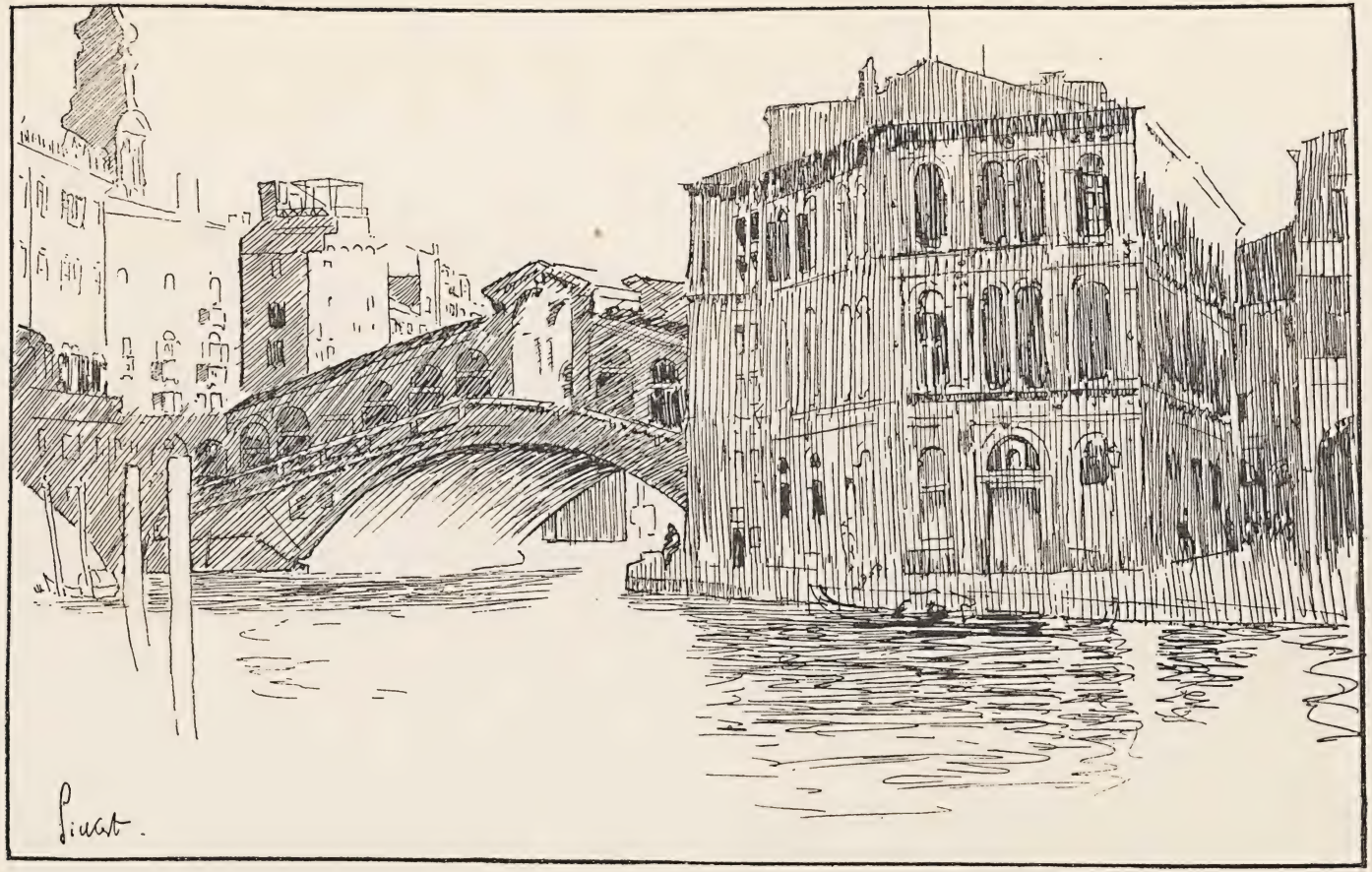
We wept together by her tomb,
And turned to our childless home.
Our heads have whitened on our way,
Our joys are gone, our sorrows stay.
But now our time is nearly spent,
We may not sit in quiet content,
Breathe out in peace our feeble breath,
Beneath the kindly hand of Death,
And so, together, hand in hand,
Journey towards the happy land. [*He sinks down feebly at her feet.*

The Old Woman. Nay, do not grieve, my dear, we will not part:
No stranger's hand shall close our tired eyes;
Together we will wait Death's hand upon our heart,
Together we will wake to heaven's glad surprise.

The Old Man. [*In a weak voice.*] Kiss me, sweetheart, the blades of corn are high,
And not a soul can see of all the passers by.

[*He stretches out his arms to her, and she, leaning forward, kisses him. A long silence. Their breathing gets shorter and shorter, and finally ceases. The* SOUL OF THE DEAD CHILD, *coming forward, closes their eyes gently, and kisses them on the forehead.*

LEILA MACDONALD.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THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF
MADAME DU BARRY

BY

ROBERT B. DOUGLAS

"Χαίροις, γύναι, εκ γὰρ ακουῆς
"οικτείρω σέ γ'," ἔφην, "ἦν πάρος οὐκ ἰδόμην
"Α πόσον ἠιθέωη νόον ἤκακες' ἀλλ' ἴδε Λήθην
ναίεις, ἀγλαίην ἐν χθονὶ κατθεμένη."

AGATHIAS.

WITH AN ENGRAVED PORTRAIT

LEONARD SMITHERS
ARUNDEL STREET: STRAND
LONDON W.C.
MDCCCXCVI

PREFACE

The ethics of comparative morality, or immorality, are not easy to understand. Why, it might be asked, are the virtuous English so tender towards the failings of Nell Gwyn, whilst the French, who do not regard concubinage as at all a heinous offence, overload with obloquy the memory of Jeanne du Barry? In birth, in circumstances of early life, and in character, the two women closely resemble one another, yet the English "general reader" still preserves a kind of sneaking regard for the one, and has learned, at second hand, to detest the other.

This is due to the fact that he has derived all his knowledge of Du Barry from French historians, who have handed down to each other—as methodically, and almost as intelligently, as a row of workmen passing bricks from a cart to a building—the statements of Pidansat du Mairobert and that industrious compiler of fictitious Memoirs, Mlle. Guénard. Translations of several of these supposed Memoirs have lately appeared, and it is to be feared have been accepted by the uncritical portion of the public as genuine. It is not improbable that the *Mémoires historiques de Jeanne Gomard de Vaubernier* may be included in the series, and as Mlle. Guénard was indebted to her imagination for her facts in the compilation of that book, I judge this to be a good opportunity to bring out a "Life of Madame du Barry," which, despite many shortcomings, should aim at giving a truthful account of the last mistress of Louis XV.

Lest it should be imagined that I am stricken with

the prevalent mania for rehabilitating, and have tried to whitewash Jeanne du Barry, I may state in advance that I have not been so foolish as to attempt anything of the kind. I have simply tried to show that she was not as black as she was painted, and that the portraits of her which have been given by three generations of historians have been overcharged with shadows.

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BY

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—Paul Verlaine in the *Revue Encyclopédique.*

To Mr. _____

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PAGES FROM THE LIFE OF LUCY NEWCOME

I

AS Lucy Newcome walked down the street, with the baby in her arms, her first sensation was one of thankfulness, to be out of the long, blank, monotonous hospital, where she had suffered obscurely; to be once more free, and in the open air. How refreshing it is to be out of doors again! she said to herself. But she had not walked many steps before the unfamiliar morning air made her feel quite light-headed; for a moment she fancied she was going to faint; and she leant against the wall, closing her eyes, until the feeling had passed. As she walked on again, things still seemed a little dizzy before her eyes, and she had to draw in long breaths, for fear that curious cloudy sensation should come into her brain once more. She held the baby carefully, drawing the edges of the cloak around its face, so that it should not feel cold and wake up. It was the first time she had carried the baby out of doors, and it seemed to her that everyone must be looking at her. She was not much afraid of being recognized, for she knew that she had altered so much since her confinement; and for that reason she was glad to be looking so thin and white and ill. But she felt sure that people would wonder who she was, and why such a young girl was carrying a baby; perhaps they would not think it was hers; she might be only carrying it for some married woman. And she let her left hand, on which there was no wedding-ring, show from under the shawl in which it had been her first instinct to envelope it. Many thoughts came into her mind, but in a dull confused way, as she walked slowly along, feeling the weight of the baby dragging at her arms. At last they began to ache so much that she looked around for somewhere to sit down. She had not noticed where she had been going; why should she? where was there for her to go? and she found herself in one of the side streets, at the end of which, she remembered, was the park. There, at all events, she could sit down; and when she had found a seat, she took the baby on her knees, and lay back in the corner with a sense of relief.

At first she did not try to think of plans for the future. She merely resigned herself, unconsciously enough, to the vague, peaceful, autumn sadness of the place and the hour. The damp smell of the earth, sharp and comforting, came to her nostrils; the leaves, smelling a little musty, dropped now and then past her face on to the shawl in which the baby was wrapt. There was only enough breeze to make a gentle sighing among the branches overhead; and she looked up at the leafy roof above her, as she had looked up so often when a child, and felt better for being there. Gradually her mind began to concentrate itself: what am I to do, she thought, what am I to do?

Just then the little creature lying on her knees stirred a little, and opened its blue eyes. She caught it to her breast with kiss after kiss, and began to rock it to and fro, with a passionate fondness. "Mammy's little one," she said; "all Mammy's, Mammy's own;" and began to croon over it, with a sort of fierce insistence. Yes, she must do something, and at once, for the child's sake.

But the more she tried to find some plan for the future, the more hopeless did the task seem to become. There was her aunt, whom she would never go back to, whom she would never see again; never. There was her cousin, who had cast her off; and she said to herself that she hated her cousin. All her aunt's friends were so respectable: they would never look at her; and she could never go to them. Her cousin's friends were like himself, only worse, much worse. No, there was nowhere for her to look for help; and how was she to help herself? She knew nothing of any sort of business, she had no showy accomplishments to put to use; and besides, with a baby, who would give her employment? Oh, why had she ever listened to her cousin, why had she been such a fool as to have a baby? she said to herself, furiously; and then, feeling the bundle stir in her arms, she fell to hugging and kissing it again.

As she lifted up her face, a woman who was passing half paused, looking at her in a puzzled way, and then, after walking on a little distance, turned and came back, hesitatingly. Lucy knew her well: it was Mrs. Graham, her aunt's laundress, with whom she had had to settle accounts every week. She had never liked the woman, but now she was overjoyed at meeting her; and as Mrs. Graham said, questioningly, "Miss Lucy? Lord, now, it isn't you?" she answered, "Yes, it 's me; don't you know me, Mrs. Graham?"

"Well," the woman said, "I wasn't sure; how you have changed, miss I asked Mrs. Newcome where you was, and she said you was gone abroad."

The woman stopped and looked curiously at the baby. She had taken

in the situation at a glance; and though she was rather surprised, she was not nearly so much surprised as Lucy had expected, and she seemed more interested than shocked.

"Pretty baby, miss," she said, stooping down to have a closer look.

"Yes," said Lucy, in a matter of fact way, "it 's my baby. I've been very unhappy."

"Have you now, miss?" said Mrs. Graham, sitting down by her side, and looking at her more curiously than ever. "Well, you do look ill. But where have you been all this time, and where are you living now?"

"I'm not living anywhere," said Lucy; "I only came out of hospital to-day and I've nowhere to go."

"You don't mean to say that!" said Mrs. Graham; "but," she added, looking at the baby, "his father . . ."

"He has left me," said Lucy, as quietly as she could.

At this Mrs. Graham glanced at her in a somewhat less favourable way. She did not disapprove of people running away from home and getting children as irregularly as they liked; but she very much disapproved of their being left.

"I haven't a penny in the world," Lucy went on; "at least, I have only a little more than two shillings; and I don't know what I am going to do."

"Oh dear now, oh dear!" said Mrs. Graham, rather coldly, "that 's very sad, it is. I do say that's hard lines. And so you was left without anything. That's very hard lines."

"I'm so glad I met you, Mrs. Graham," said Lucy. "Perhaps you can help me. Oh, do try to help me if you can! I haven't anybody, really, to look to, and I haven't a roof to shelter me. I can't stay in the streets all day. I'm so afraid the baby will take cold, or something. It isn't for myself I mind so much. What shall I do?"

While Lucy spoke, Mrs. Graham was considering matters. Without being exactly hard-hearted, she was not naturally sympathetic, and, while she felt sorry for the poor girl, she was not at all carried away by her feelings. But she did not like to leave her there as she was, and an idea had occurred to her which made her all the more ready to act kindly towards a creature in distress. So she said, after a moment's pause, "Well, you'd better come along with me, miss, and have a rest, anyway. Shan't I carry the baby?"

"Oh, you are good!" cried Lucy, seizing her hand, and almost crying as she tried to thank her. "No, no, I'll carry the baby! And may I really come in with you? You don't mind? You don't mind being seen?"

"Oh, no, *I* don't mind!" said Mrs. Graham, a little loftily. "It 's this way, miss."

And they began to walk across the park. Lucy felt so immensely relieved that she was almost gay. She gave up thinking of what was going to happen, and trudged along contentedly by the side of the older woman. After they had left the park and had reached the poorer quarter of the town, she suddenly stopped outside a sweet-shop. "It won't be very extravagant if I get a pennyworth of acid-drops, will it?" she said, with almost her old smile; and Mrs. Graham had to wait while she went in and bought them. Then they went on together through street after street, till at last Mrs. Graham said, "It 's here, come in."

As the door opened Lucy heard the barking of a dog; and next moment she found herself in a room such as she had never been in in her life, but which seemed to her, at that moment, the most delightful place in the world. It was a kitchen, horribly dirty, with a dog-kennel in one corner, and a rabbit-hutch on the top of the kennel; there was a patchwork rug on the floor, and a deal table in the middle, with a piece of paper on one end of it as a table-cloth, and a loaf of bread, without a plate, standing in the middle of the table.

"Have something to eat, miss," said Mrs. Graham, and Lucy sank into an old stuffed armchair, which stood by the side of the fire-place, the springs broken and protruding, and the flock coming through the horse-hair in great gray handfuls.

The baby was still asleep, and lay quietly on her lap as she munched ravenously at the thick slice of bread and butter which Mrs. Graham cut for her. All at once she heard a little cry, and, looking round in the corner behind her, she saw a baby lying in a clothes-basket.

"You'll have to sleep with the children to-night," said Mrs. Graham. "We've only two rooms besides this, and the children has one of them. When you've had a bit of a meal, you'd better lie down and rest yourself."

When Lucy went into the room which was to be her bedroom for the night, she could not at first distinguish the bed. There were no bedclothes, but some old coats and petticoats had been heaped up over a mattress on a little iron bedstead in the corner.

"Now just lie down for a bit," said Mrs. Graham, "and you give me the baby. I know the ways of them."

Lucy threw herself on the bed. She could at least rest there; and she put a couple of acid-drops into her mouth, and then, almost before she knew it, she was asleep, in her old baby-fashion, sucking her thumb.

II

Lucy slept at Mrs. Graham's two nights. She had been told that she would have to work ; and she would do anything, she said, anything. Mrs. Graham had a cousin, Mrs. Marsh, who had a large laundry ; and Mrs. Marsh happened to be just then in want of a shirt and collar hand. Lucy knew nothing about ironing, but she was sure she could learn it without the least difficulty. So the two women set out for Mrs. Marsh's. It was not very far off, and when they got there Mr. and Mrs. Marsh were standing at the big side-gate, where the things were brought in and out, watching one of their vans being unloaded. The shop-door was open, and inside, in the midst of the faint steam, rising from piles of white linen, smoking under the crisp hiss of the hot irons, Lucy saw four young women, wearing loose blouses, their sleeves rolled up above their elbows, their faces flushed with the heat, bending over their work. Mrs. Marsh looked at her amiably enough, and she led the way into the laundry. Besides the four girls, the two shirt and collar hands, the gauferer and the plain ironer, there was a man ramming clothes into a boiler with a long pole, and a youth, Mrs. Marsh's son, turning a queer, new-fangled instrument like a barrel, which dollied the clothes by means of some mechanical contrivance. Clothes were hanging all around on clothes-horses, and overhead, on lines ; the shirts were piled up in neat heaps at the end of the ironing-boards ; some of the things lay in baskets on the ground. As Lucy looked around, her eye suddenly caught a white embroidered dress which was hanging up to dry ; and for the moment she felt quite sick ; it was exactly like a dress of her mother's.

And the heat, too, was overpowering ; she scarcely knew what was being said, as the two women discussed her to her face, and bargained between themselves as to the price of her labour. She realized that she was to come there next day ; that she was to learn to iron cuffs and collars and shirt-fronts like the young woman nearest to her, whom they called Polly ; and, as a special favour, she was to be paid eight shillings a-week, the full price at once instead of only six shillings, which was generally given to beginners. That she realized, she realized it acutely ; for she was already beginning to find out that money means something very definite when you are poor, and that a shilling more or less may mean all the difference between everything and nothing.

That day it was arranged that she should rent a little attic in a house

not far from Mrs. Graham's, a house where a carpenter and his wife lived: they had no children, and she could have a room to herself. She was to pay five shillings a-week for her room and what they called her keep, that is to say, breakfast and supper, which, she soon found out, meant bread and cheese one day, bread and dripping another, and bread and lard a third, always with some very weak tea, water just coloured. Then there was the baby; she could not look after the baby while she was out at work, so the carpenter's wife, who was called Mrs. Marsh, like the laundress, though she was no relation, promised to take charge of the baby during the day for half-a-crown extra. Five shillings and half-a-crown made seven-and-six, and that left her only sixpence a week to live on: could one say to live on? At all events, she had now a roof over her head; she would scarcely starve, not quite starve; and she sat in her attic, the first night she found herself there, and wondered what was going to happen: if she would have strength to do the work, strength to live on, day after day, strength to nurse her baby, whose little life depended on hers. She sat on the edge of the bed, looking out at the clear, starry sky, visible above the roofs, and she sent up a prayer, up into that placid, unresponsive sky, hanging over her like the peace that passeth understanding, and has no comfort in it for mere mortals, a prayer for strength, only for the strength of day by day, one day at a time.

Next morning she took up her place at the ironing-board, next to Polly, between her and the head ironer, whom she was told to watch. They were all Lancashire girls, not bad-hearted, but coarse and ignorant, always swearing and using foul language. Lucy had never heard people who talked like that; it wounded her horribly, and her pale face went crimson at every one of their coarse jokes. They had no sort of ill-will to her, but they knew she had a child, and was not married, and they could not help reminding her of the fact, which indeed seemed to them no less scandalous than their language seemed to her. They really believed that a woman who had been seduced was exactly the same as a prostitute; they talked of people who led a gay life: "Ah, my wench, it's a gay life, but a short one;" and they were convinced that every-one who led a gay life came to a deplorable end before she was five-and-twenty. To have had a child, without having been married, was the first step, so they held, in an inevitably downward course; indeed, they believed that all kinds of horrible things came of it, and they talked to one another of the ghastly stories they had "heerd tell." Lucy had never heard of such things, and she half believed them. "Can all this really be true?" she said to herself sometimes, in a paroxysm of terror; and she tried not to think of

it, as of something that might possibly be true, but must certainly be kept out of sight and out of mind.

One of the girls, Polly, was always very nice to her, and would come round sometimes to her little room and hold the baby for her; but the others called her "Miss Stuck-up," "Miss Fine-airs," and when she blushed, cried, even, at the ribaldries which seemed to them so natural and matter-of-course, they would taunt her with her bastard, and ask her if she didn't know how a baby was made, she who pretended to be such an innocent. She never tried to answer them; she did her work (after three days she could do it almost as well as the most practised of them), and she got through day after day as best she could. "It was for baby's sake," she whispered to herself, "all for baby's sake."

In the middle of the day they had a dinner-hour, and the girls brought their dinner with them, which they generally ate out of doors, in the drying-ground at the back, glad to be out of the steam and heat for a few minutes. That hour was Lucy's terror. She had no dinner to bring with her: how could she, out of sixpence a week? and every day she pretended to go out and get her meal at an eating-house, scared lest one of them should come round the corner, and see her walking up and down the road, filling up the time until she could venture to go back again. She knew that if any one of them had guessed the truth, had known that she could never afford even the cheapest price of a dinner, they would one and all have shared with her their sandwiches, and bread and cheese, and meat pies, and apple dumplings. But she would not have let them know for worlds; and the aching suspense, lest she should be found out, was almost as bad to bear as the actual pang of hunger. She grew thinner and paler, and every day it seemed to her that the baby grew thinner and paler too. How could she nourish it, when she had no nourishment herself? She wept over it, and prayed God in agony not to visit her sin on the child. All this while the poor little thing lay and wailed, a feeble, fretful, continual wail, ceasing and going on, ceasing and going on again. It seemed to her that the sound would lodge itself in her brain, and drive her mad, quite mad. She heard it when she was in the laundry, bending over the steaming linen; it pierced through the crisp hiss of the irons as they passed shiningly over the surface; she heard it keeping time to her footsteps as she walked hungrily up and down that road in the dinner-hour; she dreamt of it even, and woke up to hear the little wail break out in the stillness of the night, in her attic bed. And the wail was getting feebler and feebler; the baby was dying, oh! she knew that it was dying, and she could not save it; there was no way, absolutely no way to save it.

III

She had now been eight weeks at the laundry, and she seemed to get thinner every day. As she looked at her face in the glass, she was quite frightened at the long hollows she saw in her white cheeks, the dark lines under her eyes: her own face seemed to fade away from her as she looked at it, away into a mist; and through the mist she heard the small persistent crying of the baby, as if from a great way off. "Am I going to be ill?" she wondered, looking down at her fingers helplessly. Certainly both she and the child were in need of the doctor; but who was to pay for a doctor? It was impossible.

That day, for the first time since she had been at the laundry, she had a half-holiday, and she put on her hat and went out into the streets, merely to walk about, and so think the less. "I can at least look at the shops," she said to herself, and she made her way to the more fashionable part of the town, where the milliners' and jewellers' shops were, and as she looked at the rings and bracelets, the smart hats and stylish jackets, it seemed to her worse than ever, to see all these things, and to know that none of them would ever be hers. It was now three o'clock; she had had nothing since her early breakfast, and the long walk, the loitering about, had tired her; it seemed to her, once more, as if a mist came floating up about her, through which the sound of voices was deadened before it reached her ears, and the ground felt a little uncertain under her feet, as if it were slightly elastic as she trod upon it. She turned aside out of the main street, into the big arcade, where she thought it would be quieter, and she found herself staring at a row of photographs of actresses, quite blankly, hardly seeing them. As she put her hand to her forehead, to press down her eyelids for a moment, she heard some one speaking to her, and looking round she saw a middle-aged gentleman standing by her side, and saying in a very kind voice: "My child, are you ill?" Was she then looking so ill? she wondered, or was she really ill? She did not think so, only hungry and faint. How hungry and faint she was! And as she shook her head, and said "No, thank you," she felt certain that the old gentleman, who looked so kind, would not believe her. Evidently he did not believe her, for he continued to look at her, and to say . . . what was it? she only knew that he told her, quite decidedly, that she must come and have some tea. "Thank you," she said again: how was she to say no? and she walked along beside the gentleman in silence. He did not say anything more, but before she

quite knew it, they were sitting at a little table in a tea-shop, and she had a cup of tea before her, real tea (how well she remembered, from what a distance, the taste of real tea!), and she was buttering a huge scone that made her mouth water, only to look at it.

When she had eaten her scone and drunk her tea, she saw that the gentleman was looking at her more kindly than ever, but with a certain expression which she could not help understanding. He was a man of about fifty, somewhat tall, with broad shoulders and a powerful head, on which the iron-gray hair was cut close. His face was bronzed, he had a thick, closely-cut beard, and his eyes were large, gray, luminous, curiously sympathetic eyes, very kind, but a little puzzling in their expression. And he began to talk to her, asking her questions, feeling his way. She blushed furiously: how he had misunderstood her! She was not angry, only frightened and disturbed; and of course such a thing could never be, never. He seemed quite grieved when she told him hurriedly that she must go; and when they were outside the shop he insisted on walking a few steps with her; if not then, would she not come and see him some other day? He would be so glad to do anything he could to help her; that is, if she would come and see him. But she blushed again, and shook her head, and told him how impossible it was; but as he insisted on her taking his card, she took it. What was the harm? He had been kind to her. And of course she would never use it.

That night, as she ate her supper of bread and dripping, washing it down with what Mrs. Marsh called tea, she thought of the tea-shop and the meal she had had there, the pleasantness of the place, the bright little tables, the waitresses gliding about, the well-dressed people who had been in there. And the life she was living seemed more unbearable than ever. At first she had been so glad to be anywhere, to find any sort of refuge, where there was a roof over her head, and some sort of bed to lie on, that the actual sordidness of her surroundings had seemed of little moment; but now it seemed more and more impossible to go on living among such people, without an educated person to speak to, without a book to read, without any of the little pleasantnesses of comfortable life. No, I cannot go on with this for ever, she said to herself; and she began to muse, thinking vague things, vaguely; thinking of what the girls at the laundry said to her, what they thought of her, and how to them it would be no difference at all, no difference at all; for was she not (they all said it) a fallen creature? When she went upstairs, and heard the feeble wail of her child, she almost wondered that she could have refused to take the man's money, which would have paid for a doctor. Oh, yes, she was

a fallen creature, no doubt; and when you are once fallen you go on falling. But of course, all the same, it was impossible: she *could* not; and there was an end of it.

But such thoughts as these, once set wandering through her brain, came back, and brought others with them. They came especially when she was very hungry; they seemed to float to her on the steam of that tea which she had drunk in the tea-shop; they whispered to her from the small, prim letters of the card which she still kept, with its sober, respectable-looking name, "Mr. Reginald Barfoot," and the address of a huge, handsome building which she had often seen, mostly laid out in bachelor's flats, very expensive flats. But of course, all the same, it was impossible.

IV

On the Saturday of that week, while she was working at the laundry, she had a message from Mrs. Marsh to say that her child was very ill. She hurried back, and found the little thing in convulsions. The poor little wasted body shook as if every moment would be its last. She held it in her arms, and crooned over it, and cried over it, and with her lips and fingers seemed to soothe the pain out of it. Presently it dropped into a quiet slumber. Lucy sat on the chair by the bedside, and thought. She had never seen an attack like that: she was terribly frightened: would it not come on again? and if so, what was to be done? A doctor, certainly a doctor must be called. But she had no money, and doctors (she remembered her aunt's doctor) were so expensive. The money must be got, and at once. She looked at the card, at the address. Was it not a matter of life or death? She would go.

Then she felt that it was impossible; that she could never do it. Was it really a matter of life or death? The baby slept quietly. She would wait till to-morrow.

Through that night, and half-way through Sunday, the child seemed much better; but about three the convulsions came on again. Lucy was frantic with terror, and when the little thing, now growing feebler and feebler, had got over a worse paroxysm than ever, and had quieted down again, she called Mrs. Marsh, and begged her to look after the child while she went and fetched the doctor. "I may be a little while," she said; "but baby is quiet now; you'll

be very careful, won't you?" She gave the child one big kiss on both his little eyes; then she put on her hat and went out.

She went straight to the address on the card, without hesitation now, rang at the door, and a man-servant showed her into a room which seemed to her filled with books and photographs and pretty things. There was a fire in the grate, which shed a warm, comfortable glow over everything. She held out her hands to it; she was shivering a little. How nice it is here, she could not help thinking, or, rather, the sensation of its comfort flashed through her unconsciously, as she stood there looking at the photographs above the mantelpiece, as blankly as she had looked at those photographs, that other day, in the arcade. And then the door opened, and Mr. Barfoot came in, smiling, as he had smiled at her before. He did not say anything, only smiled; and as he came quite close, and took her hand, a sudden terror came into her eyes, she drew back violently, and covering her face with her hands, sobbed out, "I can't, I can't!"

For a moment the man looked at her wonderingly; then the expression of his face changed, he took her hands very gently, saying, "My poor child!" Something in the voice and touch reassured her; she let him draw away her hands from before her eyes, in which the tears were beginning to creep over the lower eyelids. She looked straight into his face; there was no smile there now, and she almost wondered why she had been so frightened a moment before. He led her to a chair. "Sit down, now," he said, "and let us have a talk." She sat down, already with a sense of relief, and he drew up a chair beside her, and took her hand again, soothingly, as one might take the hand of a timid child. "Now," he said, "tell me all about it. How ill you look, my poor girl. You are in trouble. Tell me all about it."

At first she was silent, looking into his face with a sort of hesitating confidence. Then, looking down again, she said, "May I?"

"I want you to," he said. "I want you to let me help you."

"Oh, will you?" she said impulsively, pressing the hand he held. "I haven't a friend in the world. I am all alone. I have been very unhappy. It was all my fault. Will you really help me? It isn't for myself, it . . . it 's my baby. I am afraid he 's dying, he 's so very ill, and to-day he had convulsions, and I thought . . . I thought he would really have died. And I haven't a penny to get a doctor. And that 's why I came."

She broke off, and the hesitation came into her eyes again. She let her hand rest quite still; he felt the fingers turning cold as she waited for what he would say.

"Why didn't you tell me before?" was all he said, but the voice and the eyes were kinder than ever. She almost smiled, she was so grateful; and he went on, "Now we must see about the doctor at once. There's a doctor who lives only three doors from here. If he's in, you must take him back with you. Here, do you see, you'll give him this card; or, no, I'll see him about that. Just get him to come with you. And now I'm going to give you a sovereign, for anything you want, and to-morrow . . . but first of all, the doctor. Would you like me to come with you?"

"No, please," said Lucy.

"Well, you had better go there at once. And mind you get anything you want, and for yourself, too. Why, you don't know how ill you look yourself! And then to-morrow I shall come and see how you are getting on, and then you must tell me all about yourself. Not now. You go straight to the doctor. By the way, what is your address?"

Lucy told him, hardly able to speak; she could not quite understand how it was that things had turned out so differently from what she had expected, or how everything seemed to be coming right without any trouble at all. She was bewildered, grateful, quiescent; and as she got up, and closed her hand mechanically over the sovereign he slipped into it, she was already thinking of the next thing to do, to find the doctor, to take the doctor back with her at once, to save her child.

"Now I shall come in to-morrow at eleven," she heard him saying, "and then I'll see if you want anything more. Now good-bye. Dr. Hedges, the third door from here, on the same side."

He opened the door for her himself, and as she went downstairs she felt the sovereign in her hand, pressing into her flesh, in a little round circle. She wrapped up the sovereign in her handkerchief, and thrust it into her bodice. She was repeating, "Dr. Hedges, the third door from here, on the same side," over and over again, without knowing it, so mechanically, that she would have passed the door had she not seen a brougham standing outside. It was the doctor's brougham, and as she went up the steps in front of the house, the door opened and the doctor himself came out. "I want you, please, to come with me at once," she said; "my baby . . . I'm afraid he'll die if you don't. Can you come at once?"

The doctor looked at her critically; he liked pretty women, and this one was so young too. "Yes, my dear," he said, "I'll come at once, if you like. Where is it? All right; jump in; we'll be there in a minute."

The doctor talked cheerfully, and without expecting any answer, all the

way to the house. "It 's the mother," he thought to himself, "who wants the doctor." Lucy sat by his side white and motionless, putting up her hand sometimes to her bodice, to feel if the gold was there. "Heart wrong," thought the doctor.

When they reached the house, Lucy opened the door. "Come in," she said, and began to fly up the stairs; then, suddenly checking herself, "No, come quietly, perhaps baby is sleeping." They went up quietly, and Lucy opened the attic door with infinite precaution. As she held open the door for the doctor to come in, she saw Mrs. Marsh move towards her, she saw the bed, and on the bed a little body lying motionless, its white face on the pillow; she saw it all at a glance, and, as the doctor came cheerfully into the room, she realized that everything had been in vain, that (she said to herself) she had waited just too long.

She sat down by the side of the bed, and looked straight in front of her, not saying a word, nor crying; she seemed to herself to have been stunned. The doctor examined the child, and then, taking Mrs. Marsh into a corner of the room, began to question her. "Poor little thing," said Mrs. Marsh, "he just went off like you might have snuffed out a candle. He was always weakly, like; and she, you know, sir, she ain't by no means strong, not fit to have the charge of a baby, sir. I'm that thankful she takes it so quiet like. Did you say, sir, there'll have to be a crowner's quest? Well, I do hope not; it do look so bad."

At this moment they heard a wild cry behind them; both turned, and saw Lucy fling herself full length upon the bed, clasping the little body in her arms, sobbing convulsively. The tears streamed down her cheeks, the sobs forced themselves out in great bursts, almost in shouts. "It will do her good to have a good cry," said the doctor. "I'll leave you now; rely on me to see afterthings." And he went out quietly.

Lucy never remembered quite how she got through the rest of that day. It always seemed to her afterwards like a bad dream, through which she had found her way vaguely, in a thick darkness. Early in the evening she undressed and went to bed, and then, lying awake in the little room where the dead baby lay folded in white things and covered up for its long sleep, her mind seemed to soak in, unconsciously, all the discomfortable impressions that had made up her life since she had been living in that miserable little room. Through all the hopeless sordidness of that life she lived again, enduring the insults of the laundry, the labour of long days, starvation almost, and the loneliness of forced companionship with such people as Mrs. Marsh

and Polly the ironer. She had borne it for her child's sake, and now there was no longer any reason for bearing it. Her life had come to a full stop; the past was irrevocably past, folded away like the little dead body; her mind had not the courage to look a single step before her into the future; she closed her eyes, and tried to shut down the darkness upon her brain.

When she awoke in the morning it was nearly nine o'clock. She got up and dressed slowly, carefully, and when she had had her breakfast she went out to an undertaker's, from whom she ordered a baby's coffin. Remembering that she had a sovereign, she asked him to make it very nicely, and chose the particular kind of wood. She stayed in the shop some time, looking at inscriptions on the coffin lids, and asking questions about the ages of the people who were going to be buried. When she got back it was nearly eleven. She had taken off her hat, and was tidying her hair, quite mechanically, in front of the glass, when she heard a clock strike. Then she remembered that Mr. Barfoot was coming to see her about eleven. She stood there, lifting the hair back from her forehead with her two thin hands, and her eyes met their reflection in the glass, very seriously and meditatively.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

AVBREY BEAR DSLEY
MAX

THE TRUANTS' HOLIDAY

COME, let us forth, Sibylla! The brave day,
See, 's all a-quiver with its gold and blue!
Come, let us fly these paltry streets, and pay
Our matin worship at some woodland shrine,
Where yet the pearl 's on rose and eglantine
Not vainly there to sue
From Nature's absolution and grave peace
Of town-bred weariness an hour or so 's release!

Oh! what enchantment lures us! The glad fields,
The dappled woodland, the chaste, whispering stream;
Yea, every marvel which rare Nature yields
Of colour, or perfume, or entangled sound,
To those who awefully approach her ground;—
Dear, how each joy doth seem
This hour conspired t' entrance us in some spell
Of fairyland's delight, no mortal song may tell!

What are these days we spend in curious toil,
In hectic pleasure, and misname them life?
Ah! what last gain shall London's heart assoil
For skies beclouded, Nature's fragrant breath
Made poisonous for us; whilst, more grim than Death,
Amid the lonely strife,
Goading us on from fatal hour to hour
The brooding eyes of Care on her cowed victims lower?

Come, let us forth! why heed pale Duty's frown,
If from th' accustomed task our truant feet
Turn wantonly, stale prisoners of the Town?
Come, come, let 's haste, ere yet a jealous fate

On steps that falter shall cry out "Too late!"
Nay, do not linger, Sweet!
Joy calls a-flying: whoso fears t' obey her,
May grieve the live-long day in vain attempt to stay her!

SELWYN IMAGE.

ON THE KIND OF FICTION CALLED MORBID

THIS is a poison-bad world for the romancer, this Anglo-Saxon world," wrote Robert Louis Stevenson to Mr. Sidney Colvin : and if a popular writer with an obvious style, after his years of experience, came to this conclusion, we risk little in asserting that the same conclusion has been reached by many another writer whose style is not obvious, and who is not so popular. Amongst these, the man who would be always introducing the thin presence of Death is, without doubt, the most reviled ; we will have nothing of a fellow who comes to our feasts with a skull. And though we all agree that *Memento homo quia pulvis es* is a fine and wise saying, yet, i' faith ! we are content to leave it at that ; and we clap the rogue who recalls it in the stocks. Nay ! Ash Wednesday would have been long ago rubbed out of the calendar, save that we are careful not to understand the full significance of it ; just as we are careful not to understand the full significance of Good Friday.

The smiling gentleman who hails us in the street does not like to think that one day he must be dead ; archbishops are supposed not to like a dwelling on that ; and a certain parson of easy life, whose business it is to preach mortality, when invited by a plain writer to fall into a better acquaintance with the cold guide who shall lead him to the Eternal Hills, flies into a passion, calls my plain writer (of all things in the world !) *immoral*, and sits down, raging, to write insolent letters to the papers. But (you will ask), do not these people give a man the credit of his courage in facing what they dare not face ? Well, no. For when a man has done the day's appointed labour, he stirs the fire, sinks into his armchair, and lo ! in a trice he spurns the hearth and is off swinging the sword and aiding somewhat sulky damsels with De Marsac ; or, if he is of a cold habit of body, he wanders in lanes where the clover breathes, and John and Joan while away the white-winged hours a-wooing. Or again, he hies to the ball, and watches the tenderness with which my lord and the farmer's daughter take the floor. If, then, to this man

a person of wry visage and hearse-like airs comes offering a sombre story—why, up he leaps, grasps the intrusive fellow by the shoulders, and lands him in the street. No; it is certain that abnormal nerves are not understood or thought proper in the suburban villa: and they are not tolerated by the Press, which is almost the same thing. Even editors, those cocks that show how the popular wind blows, if they have no kicks, have few ha'pence for the writer of stories which are not sops to our pleasure. The thought of death is not pleasant! (folk may be imagined to exclaim); to escape that we laugh at sorry farces and the works of Mr. Mark Twain; and yet, here is a zany with a hatful of dun thoughts formed to make one meditate on one's tomb for a week!

Still, for him, poor devil! life is not all (as they say) beer and skittles. With an impatience of facility, he sets to work sedulously on a branch of art which he is pleased to consider difficult; it cannot be pleasant work, since it progresses with shudders and cold sweats; it cannot be easy, since it is acknowledged to be no easy thing to turn the blood from men's faces. He is even charmed by the fancy that he is driving his pen to a very high measure. He may (by chance) be right; he is possibly wrong; but I am glad to say I have yet to hear that Banquo's ghost at the feast, and Cæsar's ghost in the tent, are deemed infamous, or (as the cant goes) immoral. And, talking of Shakespeare, has it ever occurred to you how the critics would waggle their heads at "Romeo and Juliet," if it were presented to-day as a new piece by William Shakespeare, Esq.?

> "As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
> Where, for these many hundred years, the bones
> Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd;
> Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
> Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,
> At some hours in the night spirits resort;—
> Alack! alack! is it not like, that I,
> So early waking,—what with loathsome smells,
> And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,
> That living mortals, hearing them, run mad;—
> O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
> Environed with all these hideous fears?
> And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
> And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
> And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
> As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?"

Methinks I see the words: "exotic," "morbid," "unhealthy," ready-made for that! Ah! how, then, can my modern writer expect to be suffered,

any more than we suffer an undertaker to send out cards setting forth the excellence of his wares. When he takes to the road, he must know that he is in for a weary and footsore journey: comely persons, in beautiful garments, with eyes full of invitation look down from bordering windows and jeer at his sober parade; he sees cool, shaded by-lanes which are never for him; others pass him on the road singing blithe, gamesome songs, and he is left to loiter. And be sure he travels in glum company: the stiff-featured dead, with their thin hands and strange smile, fall into step with him and tell him their dream-like tales. The poor dead, whom we all forget so soon on this sunny earth! I think they tell him that they have a kindness for those who perform the last offices for them: the dead villager for the barber and the crone, the dead peer for the undertakers who come by night to Belgrave Square. Perhaps it is from fear of the ghosts who attend the march, that the writers of aweful stories are few and far between, up and down the world. And when we meet with such a one, whose head is humming like a top from the gray talk of his fellow-passengers, should we not thank (rather than stone) him for his sense of the decency of things, which prevents him from going tearing mad and holding the highway with a gun? I will wager that the recognition of this is all he asks of reward from the "poison-bad world for the romancer," for sticking with iron courage to the graveside, and refusing to engage in work less resolute, and more easy.

Yes, more easy; for it *is* more easy—if more degrading—to write a certain kind of novel. To take a fanciful instance, it is more easy to write the history of Miss Perfect: how, upon the death of her parents, she comes to reside in the village, and lives there mildly and sedately; and how one day, in the course of her walk abroad, she is noticed by the squire's lady, who straightway transports her to the Hall. And, of course, she soon becomes mighty well with the family, and the squire's son becomes enamoured of her. Then the clouds must gather: and a villain lord comes on the scene to bombard her virtue with clumsy artillery. Finding after months that her virtue dwells in an impregnable citadel, he turns to, and jibes and goads the young squire to the fighting point. And, presto! there they are, hard at it with bare steel, on the Norman beach, of a drizzling morning; and the squire is just pressing hot upon my lord, when—it's hey! for the old love, and ho! for the new—out rushes my Miss Perfect to our great amazement, and falls between the swords down on the stinging sands, in the sight of the toiling sea. Now I maintain, that a novel woven of these meagre threads, and set out in three volumes and a brave binding, would put up a good front at Mudie's;

would become, it too, after a while, morality packed in a box. For nowadays we seem to nourish our morals with the thinnest milk and water, with a good dose of sugar added, and not a suspicion of lemon at all.

You will note that the letter-writer says, the "*Anglo-Saxon* world"—Great Britain, say! and the United States; and it is well to keep in mind this distinction. In France, for example, people appear eager to watch how art triumphs over any matter. "Charles Baudelaire," says Hamerton, "had the poetical organization with all its worst inconveniences;" but one inconvenience he had not—the inconvenience of a timid public not interested in form, and with a profound hatred of the unusual: a public from which Edgar Poe, Beddoes, and Francis Saltus (to name but three) suffered—how poignantly! Let us cling by all means to our George Meredith, our Henry James—our Miss Rhoda Broughton, if you will; but then let us try, if we cannot be towards others, unlike these, if not encouraging, at the least not actively hostile and harassing, when they go out in the black night to follow their own sullen will-o'-the-wisps.

VINCENT O'SULLIVAN.

4 mai 93.

COUNTESS MARIE OF THE ANGELS

À Jean de Tinan

I

AS he turned out of his hotel in the Avenue de l'Opéra, comparatively obscure at that hour, and emerged into the *grands boulevards*, Paris flashed upon him, all at once, her brightest illumination: row upon row of lamps tapering away in a double file to meet in a single point of light far away in the direction of the Place de la République. If it was winter by the calendar, the languid mellowness of a fine autumn lingered in the air. The Boulevard des Italiens was massed with wayfarers, sauntering, lounging with aimless and amiable nonchalance, while a gay Sunday crowd monopolized all the little tables outside the small and large cafés.

Colonel Mallory searched for a vacant place at one of them, then abandoned the search and moved slowly along, joining the rest of the throng with steps as aimless, but with sentiments somewhat remote from theirs.

Fifty, perhaps, of middle stature, his white moustache was in striking contrast with his short, crisp hair which had retained its original darkness. Obviously English, with his keen, blue eyes; obviously a soldier too, in gait and bearing, and in a certain sternness which comes of command, of high responsibility in perilous places, even when that command is kindly. An Anglo-Indian, to judge by his complexion, and the lines, tell-tale of the tropics, which scored his long, lean face, the colour of parchment. Less obviously English, and hardly military, was a certain grace, almost exotic, in his manner. He had emerged into the Boulevard Montmartre before a café, less frequented than the others, caught his eye, and with a certain relief he could possess himself of a vacant chair on the *terrasse*. He ordered a drink, lit a cigar, and settled himself to watch with an interest which was not so much present as retrospective, the crowd of passers-by. And as he watched his eyes softened into sadness.

He had arrived from England that morning—he had not so very long arrived from India—and this crowd, these lights, the hard, bright gaiety of the boulevards was at once fantastically strange to him and strangely familiar; for, twenty, or was it nearer thirty years ago, Paris had been to him not merely the city of cities, but that one of them which most represented old associations, his adolescence, boyhood, childhood. True, there had been Les Rochers, the dilapidated château, half ruin to his recollection, and now wholly a ruin, or perhaps demolished—Les Rochers in the Vendée, where he had been born, where he had spent his summer holidays, where—how many years ago?—being at home on leave, just after he had obtained his company, he had closed the eyes of his mother.

But Paris! It was his best remembered boyhood; the interrupted studies in the Quartier, the Lycée, the boyish friendships, long since obliterated, the days of *congé* spent in the little hotel in the Rue de Varennes, where, more often than at Les Rochers, his mother, on her perpetual couch, economized her delicate days—days even then so clearly defined—as it were in an half twilight. Yes, until death and estrangement and the stern hand of circumstance had cast away that old life into the limbo of the dear irrevocable, that old life had been—Paris! Episodes the rest: the occasional visits to the relations of his English father; and later, episodes too, London, murky London, the days at Wren's, the month or so with an army-coach at Bonn, the course at Woolwich; almost episodical too the first year of his soldiering. Quartered at Dover, what leave fell to him, he had spent in Paris—at Les Rochers sometimes, but more often at Paris—in those strangely silent rooms in the Rue de Varennes.

Looking out now, the phantasmagoria of the boulevards was obliterated and those old days floated up before him. Long before Woolwich: that time when he was a Lycéen, in the winter holidays. A vision so distinct! His mother's *salon*, the ancient, withered furniture, the faded silk of the Louis XV. chairs, the worn carpet: his mother's refined and suffering face, the quaint bird-like features of the two old Mesdemoiselles de la Touche—the near neighbours of his mother and the most intimate gossips round her couch—two ancient sisters, very noble and very withered, dating from Charles X., absorbed in good works, in the merits of their confessor, and in the exile of Frohsdorf. Very shadowy figures, more shadowy even than that of himself, in the trim uniform of his Lycée; a grave and rather silent boy, saddened by the twilight of that house, the atmosphere of his invalid mother.

More distinct was the dainty figure of a little girl, a child of fifteen, but seeming younger, united to him by a certain cousinship, remote enough to be

valued, who, on her days of exit from the Sacré Cœur (his mother's constant visitor), talked with him sedately, softly—for there was a sort of hush always in that house—in an alcove of the sombre room. This child with her fragility, her face of a youthful Madonna, the decorous plaits in which her silken hair was gathered, losing thereby some of its lustre—the child seemed incongruous with and somewhat crushed and awed beneath the weight of her sonorous names: Marie-Joseph-Angèle de la Tour de Boiserie.

What did they converse of on those long and really isolated afternoons—isolated, for their elders, if they were present, and their presence overshadowed them, were really so remote, with their lives in the past, in lost things; their so little hold on, or care of, the future?

But these were young, and if some of the freshness of youth had been sacrificed a little to what was oppressive in their surroundings, yet they were young things, with certain common interests, and a future before them, if not of boundless possibilities, still a future.

Yet it was hardly of love which they could speak, though their kindness for each other, fostered by somewhat similar conditions, had ripened into that feeling. Of love there could be no question: for Sebastian Mallory, as for his little companion, their life, as it should be, had been already somewhat arranged. For Angèle, had not the iron-featured old grandmother, in her stately but penurious retreat near Les Rochers, resolved long ago that the shattered fortunes of a great house, so poor in all but name, were to be retrieved by a rich marriage? And for Sebastian, was not all hope of fortune centred in his adhesion to the plan which had so long been made for him: the course at Woolwich, the military career—with its prosperous probabilities beneath the protection of an influential relative—the exile, as it sometimes seemed to him then, in England? . . .

Certainly, there was much affection between these two, an affection maintained on the strength of the ambiguous cousinship, in a correspondence, scanty, but on each side sincere, for at least a few years after their roads had diverged. And there were other memories, later and more poignant, and as distinct, which surged up before his eyes; and the actual life of the boulevards grew vaguer. Had life been too much arranged for them? Had it been happier, perhaps, for him, for her, if they had been less acquiescent to circumstance, had interpreted duty, necessity—words early familiar to them—more leniently?

Colonel Mallory, at fifty, with his prosperous life behind him—and it had not been without its meed of glory—wondered to-night whether, after all, it

had not been with prophetic foresight, that once, writing, in a sudden mood of despondency, more frankly than usual, to that charming friend of his boyhood, he had said, years ago:

"*I feel all this is a mistake;*" and, lower down in the same letter: "*Paris haunts me like a regret. I feel, as we say here, 'out of it.' And I fear I shall never make a good soldier. Not that I mean that I am lacking in physical courage, nor that I should disgrace myself under fire. But there is a difference between that and possession of the military vocation, and nature never designed me to be a man of action. . . . My mother, you, yourself, my dear, grave cousin and councillor, think much of duty, and I shall always endeavour to do mine—as circumstances have set it down for me—but there is a duty one owes to oneself, to one's character, and in that, perhaps, I have failed.*"

A letter, dated "Simla," the last he would ever write to Mademoiselle de la Tour de Boiserie, actually, at that time, though of this fact he was ignorant, betrothed to a certain Comte Raoul des Anges. The news of the marriage reached him months later, just fresh from the excitement and tumult of a little border war, from which he had returned with a name already associated with gallantry, and a somewhat ugly wound from a Pathan spear.

In hospital, in the long nights and days, in the grievous heats, he had leisure for thought, and it is to be presumed he exercised it in a more strict analysis of his feelings, and it was certainly from this date that a somewhat stern reticence and reserve, which had always characterized his manner, became ingrained and inveterate.

And it was reticently, incidentally, and with little obvious feeling that he touched on the news in a letter to his mother:

"*Et ce M. des Anges, dont je ne connais que le nom, est-il digne de notre enfant? His name at least is propitious. Tell la petite cousine—or tell her not, as you think fit, that to me she will always be 'Marie of the Angels.'*"

II

That had seemed the end of it, of their vaguely tender and now so incongruous relation; as it was inevitably the end of their correspondence. And he set himself, buoyed up by a certain vein of austerity in his nature, to conquer that instinctive distaste which, from time to time, still exercised him towards his profession, to throw himself into its practice and theory, if not with ardour, at least with an earnestness that was its creditable imitation. And in due time he reaped his reward. . . .

But there was another memory—for the past will so very rarely bury its dead—a memory intense and incandescent, and, for all its bitterness, one which he could ill have spared.

That was five years later: invalided home, on a long leave, with a fine aroma of distinction attaching to him, it was after the funeral of his mother, after all the sad and wearisome arrangements for the disposition of Les Rochers that Colonel—then Captain—Mallory heard in Paris the loud and scandalous rumours which were associated with the figure of the Comte Raoul des Anges. There was pity mingled with the contempt with which his name was more often mentioned, for the man was young—it was his redeeming feature—but an *insensé!* It was weakness of character (some whispered weakness of intellect) and not natural vice: so the world spoke most frequently. But his head had been turned, it had not been strong enough to support the sudden weight of his immense fortune. A great name and a colossal fortune, and (*bon garçon* though he was) the intelligence of a rabbit!

In Paris, to go no further, is there not a whole army of the shrewd, the needy, and the plausible, ready to exploit such a conjunction? And to this army of well-dressed pimps and parasites, Raoul had been an easy victim. The great name had been dragged in the mire, the colossal fortune was rapidly evaporating in the same direction, what was left of the little intelligence was debased and ruined. A marriage too early, before the lad had time to collect himself, for old Madame des Anges had kept him very tight, perhaps that had been largely responsible for the collapse. And it was said the Comtesse des Anges was little congenial, a prude, at least a *dévote*, who could hardly be expected to manage *ce pauvre Raoul.* She was little known in Paris. They were separated of course, had been for a year or more; she was living with her baby, very quietly, in some old house, which belonged to her family, at Sceaux—or was it at Fontenay-aux-Roses?—on the remnants of her own fortune.

All this, and much more, Mallory heard in club and in café during that memorable sojourn in Paris. He said nothing, but he raged inwardly; and one day, moved by an immense impulse of pity and tenderness, he went down to Fontenay-aux-Roses, to visit Madame des Anges.

His visit was only for a week; that was the memory which he could not spare, and which was yet so surpassingly bitter. He had stopped at Sceaux, at an unpretending inn, but each day he had walked over to Fontenay, and each day had spent many hours with her, chiefly in the old-fashioned garden which surrounded her house. She had changed, but she had always the same

indefinable charm for him; and the virginal purity of her noble beauty, marriage had not assailed, if it had saddened. And if, at first, she was a little strange, gradually the recollection of their old alliance, her consciousness of the profundity of his kindness for her, melted the ice of their estrangement.

At last she spoke to him freely, though it had needed no speech of hers for him to discern that she was a woman who had suffered; and in the light of her great unhappiness, he only then saw all that she was to him, and how much he himself had suffered.

They were very much alone. It was late in the year; the gay crowd of the *endimanchés* had long ceased to make their weekly pilgrimages to the enchanting suburbs which surround Paris with a veritable garden of delight; and the smart villas on the hill-side, at Sceaux and Fontenay, were shut up and abandoned to caretakers. So that Captain Mallory could visit the Châlet des Rosiers without exciting undue remark, or remark that was to be accounted.

And one afternoon, as was inevitable, the flood-gates were broken down, and their two souls looked one another in the face. But if, for one moment, she abandoned herself, weeping pitiably on his shoulders, carried away, terrified almost by the vehemence of his passion; for the volcanoes, which were hidden beneath the fine crust of his reticence, his self-restraint, she had but dimly suspected; it was only for a moment. The reaction was swift and bitter; her whole life, her education, her tradition, were stronger than his protestations, stronger than their love, their extreme sympathy, stronger than her misery. And before she had answered him—calm now, although the tears were in her voice—he knew instinctively that she was once more far away from him, that she was not heeding his arguments, that what he had proposed was impossible; life was too strong for them. "Leave me, my friend, my good and old friend! I was wrong—God forgive me—even to listen to you! The one thing you can do to help me, the one thing I ask of you, for the sake of our old kindness, is—to leave me."

He had obeyed her, for the compassion, with which his love was mingled, had purged passion in him of its baser concomitants. And when the next day he had called, hardly knowing himself the object of his visit, but ready, if she still so willed it, that it should be a final one, she had not received him. . . . He was once more in India, when a packet of his old letters to her, some of them in a quite boyish handwriting, were returned to him. That she had kept them at all touched him strangely; that she should have returned them now gave him a very clear and cruel vision of how ruthlessly she would

expiate the most momentary deviation from her terrible sense of duty. And the tide of his tenderness rose higher; and with his tenderness, from time to time, a certain hope, a hope which he tried to suppress, as being somewhat of a *lâcheté*, began to be mingled.

III

"*Paris haunts me like a regret!*" That old phrase, in his last letter to Mademoiselle de la Tour de Boiserie, returned to him with irony, as he sat on the boulevard, and he smiled sadly, for the charm of Paris seemed to him now like a long disused habit. Yet, after all, had he given reminiscence a chance? For it was hardly Paris of the *grands boulevards*, with its crude illumination, its hard brilliancy, its cosmopolitan life of strangers and sojourners, which his regret had implied. The Paris of his memories, the other more intimate Paris, from the Faubourg Saint Germain to the quarter of ancient, intricate streets behind the Panthéon:—there was time to visit that, to wander vaguely in the fine evening, and recall the old landmarks, if it was hardly the hour to call on Madame des Anges.

He dined at an adjacent restaurant, hastily, for time had slipped by him—then hailed a cab, which he dismissed at the Louvre, for, after the lassitude of his meditation, a feverish impulse to walk had seized him. He traversed the Place de Carrousel, that stateliest of all squares, now gaunt and cold and bare, in its white brilliance of electricity, crossed the bridge, and then striking along the Quai, found himself almost instinctively turning into the Rue du Bac. Before a certain number he came to a halt, and stood gazing up at the inexpressive windows. . . .

More than a year ago that which he had dimly hoped, and had hated himself for hoping, had befallen. The paralytic imbecile, who had dragged out an apology for a life, which at its very best would hardly have been missed, and which had been for fifteen years a burden to himself and others, the Comte Raoul des Anges, that gilded calf of a season, whose scandalous fame had long since been forgotten, was gathered to his forefathers. That news reached Colonel Mallory in India, and mechanically, and with no very definite object in his mind, yet with a distinct sense that this course was an inevitable corollary, he had handed in his papers. But some nine months later, when, relieved of his command, and gazetted as no longer of Her Majesty's service, he was once more in possession of his freedom, it was a very different man to that youthful one who had made such broken and

impassioned utterances in the garden of the Châlet des Rosiers, who ultimately embarked in England.

The life, the service, for which he had retained, to the last, something of his old aversion, for which he had possessed, however well he had acquitted himself, perhaps little real capacity: all that had left its mark on him. He had looked on the face of Death, and affronted him so often, had missed him so narrowly, had seen him amid bloodshed and the clash of arms, and, with the same equanimity, in times of peace, when, yet more terribly, his angel, Cholera, devastated whole companies in a night, that life had come to have few terrors for him, and less importance.

Yet what was left of the old Sebastian Mallory was his abiding memory, a continual sense (as it were of a spiritual presence cheering and supporting him) of the one woman whom he had loved, whom he still loved, if not with his youth's original ardour, yet with a great tenderness and pity, partaking of the nature of the theological charity.

"Marie of the Angels," as he had once in whimsical sadness called her. Yes! He could feel now, after all those years of separation, that she had been to him in some sort a genius actually *angelic*, affording him just that salutary ideal, which a man needs, to carry him honourably, or, at least, without too much self-disgust, through the miry ways of life. And that was why, past fifty, a grim, kindly, soldierly man, he had given up soldiering and returned to find her. That was why he stood now in the Rue du Bac—for it was from there, on hearing of his intention, she had addressed him—gazing up in a sentimentality almost boyish, at those blank, unlit windows.

IV

Those windows, so cold and irresponsive, he could explain, when, returning to his hotel, he found a note from her. It was dated from the Châlet des Rosiers. She was so little in Paris, that she had thoughts of letting her house; but, to meet an old and valued friend, she would gladly have awaited him there—only, her daughter (she was still at the Sacré Cœur, although it was her last term) had been ailing. Paris did not agree with the child, and, perforce, she had been obliged to go down to Fontenay to prepare for her reception. There, at any time, was it necessary to say it? she would be glad, oh, so glad, to receive him! There was sincerity in this letter, which spoke of other things, of his life, and his great success—had she not read of him in the papers? There was affection, too, between the somewhat formal lines, reticent but real;

so much was plain to him. But the little note struck chill to him; it caused him to spend a night more troubled and painful than was his wont—for he slept as a rule the sleep of the old campaigner, and his trouble was the greater because of his growing suspicion, that, after all, the note which Madame des Anges had struck was the true one, for both of them; that a response to it in any other key would be factitious, and that his pilgrimage was a self-deception. And this impression was only heightened when, on the morrow, he made his way to the station of the Luxembourg, which had been erected long since his day, when the facilities of travel were less frequent, and took his ticket for Fontenay. So many thousand miles he had come to see her, and already a certain vague terror of his approaching interview was invading him. Ah! if it had been Paris! . . . But here, at Fontenay-aux-Roses there was no fortunate omen. It represented no common memories, but rather their separate lives and histories, except, indeed, for one brief and unhappy moment which could hardly be called propitious. . . .

Yet it was a really kind and friendly reception which she gave him; and his heart went out to her, when, after *déjeuner*, they talked of quite trivial things, and he sat watching her, her fine hands folded in her lap, in the little faded *salon*, which smelt of flowers. She had always her noble charm, and something of her old beauty, although that was but the pale ghost of what it had once been, and her soft hair, upon which she wore no insincere symbols of widowhood, was but little streaked with gray. She had proposed a stroll in the garden, where a few of its famed roses still lingered, but he made a quick gesture of refusal, and a slight flush, which suffused her pale face, told him that she comprehended his instinctive reluctance.

He fell into a brooding reverie, from which, presently, she softly interrupted him.

"You look remote and sad," she murmured; "that is wrong—the sadness! It is a pleasant day, this, for me, and I had hoped it would be the same for you too."

"I was thinking, thinking," he said,—"that I have always missed my happiness."

Then abruptly, before she could interrupt him, rising and standing before her, his head a little bowed:

"It is late in the day, but, Angèle, will you marry me?"

She was silent for a few minutes, gazing steadily with her calm and melancholy gaze into his eyes, which presently avoided it. Then she said:

"I was afraid that some such notion was in your mind. Yet I am not sorry you have spoken, for it gives me an opportunity,—an occasion of being quite sincere with you, of reasoning."

"Oh, I am very reasonable," he said, sadly.

"Yes," she threw back, quickly. "And that is why I can speak. No," she went on, after a moment, "there is no need to reason with you. My dear old friend, you see yourself as clearly as I do,—examine your heart honestly —you had no real faith in your project, you knew that it was impossible."

He made no attempt to contradict her.

"You may be right," he said; "yes, very likely, you are right. There is a season for all things, for one's happiness as for the rest, and missing it once, one misses it for ever. . . . But if things had been different. Oh, Angèle, I have loved you very well!"

She rose in her turn, made a step towards him, and there were tears in her eyes.

"My good and kind old friend! Believe me, I know it, I have always known it. How much it has helped me—through what dark and difficult days —I can say that now: the knowledge of how you felt, how loyal and staunch you were. You were never far away, even in India; and only once it hurt me." She broke off abruptly, as with a sudden transition of thought; she caught hold of both his hands, and, unresistingly, he followed her into the garden. "I will not have you take away any bitter memories of this place," she said, with a smile. "Here, where you once made a great mistake, I should like to have a recantation from your own lips, to hear that you are glad, grateful, to have escaped a great madness, a certain misery."

"There are some miseries which are like happiness."

"There are some renunciations which are better than happiness."

After a while he resumed, reluctantly:

"You are different to other women, you always knew best the needs of your own life. I see now that you would have been miserable."

"And you?" she asked, quickly.

"I may think your ideal of conduct too high, too hard for poor human flesh. I dare not say you are wrong. . . . But, no, to have known always that I had been the cause of your failing in that ideal, of lowering yourself in your own eyes—that would not have been happiness."

"That was what I wanted," she said, quickly.

Later, as he was leaving her—and there had been only vague talk of any further meeting—he said, suddenly:

"I hate to think of your days here; they stretch out with a sort of grayness. How will you live?"

"You forget I have my child, Ursule," she said. "She must necessarily occupy me very much now that she is leaving the convent. And you—you have——"

"I have given up my profession."

"Yes, so much I knew. But you have inherited an estate, have you not?"

"My uncle's place. Yes, I have Beauchamp. I suppose I shall live there. I believe it has been very much neglected."

"Yes, that is right. There is always something to do. I shall like to think of you as a model landlord."

"Think of me rather as a model friend," he said, bowing to kiss her hand as he said good-bye to her.

ERNEST DOWSON.

Paris—Pont-Aven, 1896.

A Footnote

by

Aubrey Beardsley

AB

UNDER THE HILL

A Romantic Story

CHAPTER IV

IT is always delightful to wake up in a new bedroom. The fresh wall-paper, the strange pictures, the positions of doors and windows, imperfectly grasped the night before, are revealed with all the charm of surprise when we open our eyes the next morning.

It was about eight o'clock when Fanfreluche awoke, stretched himself deliciously in his great plumed four-post bed, murmured "What a pretty room!" and freshened the frilled silk pillows behind him. Through the slim parting of the long flowered window curtains, he caught a peep of the sun-lit lawns outside, the silver fountains, the bright flowers, the gardeners at work, and beneath the shady trees some early breakfasters, dressed for a day's hunting in the distant wooded valleys.

"How sweet it all is," exclaimed the Abbé, yawning with infinite content. Then he lay back in his bed, stared at the curious patterned canopy above him and nursed his waking thoughts.

He thought of the "Romaunt de la Rose," beautiful, but all too brief.

Of the Claude in Lady Delaware's collection.[1]

Of a wonderful pair of blonde trousers he would get Madame Belleville to make for him.

Of a mysterious park full of faint echoes and romantic sounds.

Of a great stagnant lake that must have held the subtlest frogs that ever were, and was surrounded with dark unreflected trees, and sleeping fleurs de luce.

Of Saint Rose, the well-known Peruvian virgin; how she vowed herself

[1] *The* chef d'œuvre, *it seems to me, of an adorable and impeccable master, who more than any other landscape-painter puts us out of conceit with our cities, and makes us forget the country can be graceless and dull and tiresome. That he should ever have been compared unfavourably with Turner—the Wiertz of landscape-painting—seems almost incredible. Corot is Claude's only worthy rival, but he does not eclipse or supplant the earlier master. A painting of Corot's is like an exquisite lyric poem, full of love and truth; whilst one of Claude's recalls some noble eclogue glowing with rich concentrated thought.*

to perpetual virginity when she was four years old[1]; how she was beloved by Mary, who from the pale fresco in the Church of Saint Dominic, would stretch out her arms to embrace her; how she built a little oratory at the end of the garden and prayed and sang hymns in it till all the beetles, spiders, snails and creeping things came round to listen; how she promised to marry Ferdinand de Flores, and on the bridal morning perfumed herself and painted her lips, and put on her wedding frock, and decked her hair with roses, and went up to a little hill not far without the walls of Lima; how she knelt there some moments calling tenderly upon Our Lady's name, and how Saint Mary descended and kissed Rose upon the forehead and carried her up swiftly into heaven.

He thought of the splendid opening of Racine's "Britannicus."

Of a strange pamphlet he had found in Helen's library, called "A Plea for the Domestication of the Unicorn."

Of the "Bacchanals of Sporion.[2]"

[1] "*At an age,*" *writes Dubonnet,* "*when girls are for the most part well confirmed in all the hateful practices of coquetry, and attend with gusto, rather than with distaste, the hideous desires and terrible satisfactions of men!*"

All who would respire the perfumes of Saint Rose's sanctity, and enjoy the story of the adorable intimacy that subsisted between her and Our Lady, should read Mother Ursula's "*Ineffable and Miraculous Life of the Flower of Lima,*" *published shortly after the canonization of Rose by Pope Clement X. in* 1671. "*Truly,*" *exclaims the famous nun,* "*to chronicle the girlhood of this holy virgin makes as delicate a task as to trace the forms of some slim, sensitive plant, whose lightness, sweetness, and simplicity defy and trouble the most cunning pencil.*" *Mother Ursula certainly acquits herself of the task with wonderful delicacy and taste. A cheap reprint of the biography has lately been brought out by Chaillot and Son.*

[2] *A comedy ballet in one act by Philippe Savaral and Titurel de Schentefleur. The Marquis de Vandésir, who was present at the first performance, has left us a short impression of it in his* Mémoires:

"The curtain rose upon a scene of rare beauty, a remote Arcadian valley, a delicious scrap of Tempe, gracious with cool woods and watered with a little river as fresh and pastoral as a perfect fifth. It was early morning and the re-arisen sun, like the prince in the Sleeping Beauty, woke all the earth with his lips.

"In that golden embrace the night dews were caught up and made splendid, the trees were awakened from their obscure dreams, the slumber of the birds was broken, and all the flowers of the valley rejoiced, forgetting their fear of the darkness.

"Suddenly to the music of pipe and horn a troop of satyrs stepped out from the recesses of the woods bearing in their hands nuts and green boughs and flowers and roots, and whatsoever the forest yielded, to heap upon the altar of the mysterious Pan that stood in the middle of the stage; and from the hills came down the shepherds and shepherdesses leading their flocks and carrying garlands upon their crooks. Then a rustic priest, white robed and venerable, came slowly across the valley followed by a

Of Morales' Madonnas with their high egg-shaped creamy foreheads and well-crimped silken hair.

Of Rossini's "Stabat Mater" (that delightful *demodé* piece of decadence, with a quality in its music like the bloom upon wax fruit).

Of love, and of a hundred other things.

choir of radiant children. The scene was admirably stage-managed and nothing could have been more varied yet harmonious than this Arcadian group. The service was quaint and simple, but with sufficient ritual to give the *corps de ballet* an opportunity of showing its dainty skill. The dancing of the satyrs was received with huge favour, and when the priest raised his hand in final blessing, the whole troop of worshippers made such an intricate and elegant exit, that it was generally agreed that Titurel had never before shown so fine an invention.

"Scarcely had the stage been empty for a moment, when Sporion entered, followed by a brilliant rout of dandies and smart women. Sporion was a tall, slim, depraved young man with a slight stoop, a troubled walk, an oval impassable face with its olive skin drawn lightly over the bone, strong, scarlet lips, long Japanese eyes, and a great gilt toupet. Round his shoulders hung a high-collared satin cape of salmon pink with long black ribbands untied and floating about his body. His coat of sea green spotted muslin was caught in at the waist by a scarlet sash with scalloped edges and frilled out over the hips for about six inches. His trousers, loose and wrinkled, reached to the end of the calf, and were brocaded down the sides and ruched magnificently at the ankles. The stockings were of white kid with stalls for the toes, and had delicate red sandals strapped over them. But his little hands, peeping out from their frills, seemed quite the most insinuating things, such supple fingers tapering to the point with tiny nails stained pink, such unquenchable palms lined and mounted like Lord Fanny's in 'Love at all Hazards,' and such blue-veined hairless backs! In his left hand he carried a small lace handkerchief broidered with a coronet.

"As for his friends and followers, they made the most superb and insolent crowd imaginable, but to catalogue the clothes they had on would require a chapter as long as the famous tenth in Pénillière's 'History of Underlinen.' On the whole they looked a very distinguished chorus.

"Sporion stepped forward and explained with swift and various gesture that he and his friends were tired of the amusements, wearied with the poor pleasures offered by the civil world, and had invaded the Arcadian valley hoping to experience a new *frisson* in the destruction of some shepherd's or some satyr's *naïveté*, and the infusion of their venom among the dwellers of the woods.

"The chorus assented with languid but expressive movements.

"Curious and not a little frightened at the arrival of the worldly company, the sylvans began to peep nervously at those subtle souls through the branches of the trees, and one or two fauns and a shepherd or so crept out warily. Sporion and all the ladies and gentlemen made enticing sounds and invited the rustic creatures with all the grace in the world to come and join them. By little batches they came, lured by the

Then his half-closed eyes wandered among the prints that hung upon the rose-striped walls. Within the delicate curved frames lived the corrupt and gracious creatures of Dorat and his school, slender children in masque and domino smiling horribly, exquisite letchers leaning over the shoulders of smooth doll-like girls and doing nothing in particular, terrible little Pierrots posing as lady lovers and pointing at something outside the picture, and unearthly fops and huge bird-like women mingling in some rococo room, lighted mysteriously by the flicker of a dying fire that throws great shadows upon wall and ceiling.

Fanfreluche had taken some books to bed with him. One was the witty, extravagant, "Tuesday and Josephine," another was the score of "The Rheingold." Making a pulpit of his knees he propped up the opera before him and turned over the pages with a loving hand, and found it delicious to attack Wagner's brilliant comedy with the cool head of the morning.[1] Once more he was ravished with the beauty and wit of the opening scene; the mystery of its prelude that seems to come up from the very mud of the Rhine, and to be as ancient, the abominable primitive wantonness of the music that follows the talk and movements of the Rhine-maidens, the black, hateful sounds of Alberic's love-making, and the flowing melody of the river of legends.

But it was the third tableau that he applauded most that morning, the scene where Loge, like some flamboyant primeval Scapin, practises his

strange looks, by the scents and the drugs, and by the brilliant clothes, and some ventured quite near, timorously fingering the delicious textures of the stuffs. Then Sporion and each of his friends took a satyr or a shepherdess or something by the hand and made the preliminary steps of a courtly measure, for which the most admirable combinations had been invented and the most charming music written. The pastoral folk were entirely bewildered when they saw such restrained and graceful movements, and made the most grotesque and futile efforts to imitate them. Dio mio, a pretty sight! A charming effect too, was obtained by the intermixture of stockinged calf and hairy leg, of rich brocaded bodice and plain blouse, of tortured head-dress and loose untutored locks.

"When the dance was ended the servants of Sporion brought on champagne, and with many pirouettes poured it magnificently into slender glasses, and tripped about plying those Arcadian mouths that had never before tasted such a royal drink.

* * * * * *

"Then the curtain fell with a pudic rapidity."

[1] *It is a thousand pities that concerts should only be given either in the afternoon, when you are torpid, or in the evening, when you are nervous. Surely you should assist at fine music as you assist at the Mass—before noon—when your brain and heart are not too troubled and tired with the secular influences of the growing day.*

cunning upon Alberic. The feverish insistent ringing of the hammers at the forge, the dry staccato restlessness of Mime, the ceaseless coming and going of the troup of Niblungs, drawn hither and thither like a flock of terror-stricken and infernal sheep, Alberic's savage activity and metamorphoses, and Loge's rapid, flaming tongue-like movements, make the tableau the least reposeful, most troubled and confusing thing in the whole range of opera. How the Abbé rejoiced in the extravagant monstrous poetry, the heated melodrama, and splendid agitation of it all!

At eleven o'clock Fanfreluche got up and slipped off his dainty night-dress.

His bathroom was the largest and perhaps the most beautiful apartment in his splendid suite. The well-known engraving by Lorette that forms the frontispiece to Millevoye's "Architecture du XVIII^{me} siècle" will give you a better idea than any words of mine of the construction and decoration of the room. Only in Lorette's engraving the bath sunk into the middle of the floor is a little too small.

Fanfreluche stood for a moment like Narcissus gazing at his reflection in the still scented water, and then just ruffling its smooth surface with one foot, stepped elegantly into the cool basin and swam round it twice very gracefully. However, it is not so much at the very bath itself as in the drying and delicious frictions that a bather finds his chiefest joys, and Helen had appointed her most tried attendants to wait upon Fanfreluche. He was more than satisfied with their attention, that aroused feelings within him almost amounting to gratitude, and when the rites were ended any touch of home-sickness he might have felt was utterly dispelled. After he had rested a little, and sipped his chocolate, he wandered into the dressing-room, where, under the direction of the superb Dancourt, his toilet was completed.

As pleased as Lord Foppington with his appearance, the Abbé tripped off to bid good-morning to Helen. He found her in a sweet white muslin frock, wandering upon the lawn, and plucking flowers to deck her breakfast table. He kissed her lightly upon the neck.

"I'm just going to feed Adolphe," she said, pointing to a little reticule of buns that hung from her arm. Adolphe was her pet unicorn. "He is such a dear," she continued; "milk white all over, excepting his nose, mouth, and nostrils. *This* way." The unicorn had a very pretty palace of its own made of green foliage and golden bars, a fitting home for such a delicate and dainty beast. Ah, it was a splendid thing to watch the white creature roaming in its artful cage, proud and beautiful, knowing no mate, and coming to no hand except the queen's itself. As Fanfreluche and Helen approached, Adolphe

began prancing and curvetting, pawing the soft turf with his ivory hoofs and flaunting his tail like a gonfalon. Helen raised the latch and entered.

"You mustn't come in with me, Adolphe is so jealous," she said, turning to the Abbé, who was following her, "but you can stand outside and look on; Adolphe likes an audience." Then in her delicious fingers she broke the spicy buns and with affectionate niceness breakfasted her snowy pet. When the last crumbs had been scattered, Helen brushed her hands together and pretended to leave the cage without taking any further notice of Adolphe. Adolphe snorted.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

MONSIEUR J. E. BLANCHE desires to state that the reproduction of his picture, "The Painter Thaulow and his Family," in the first number of "THE SAVOY," was made from a reduced photograph, the *cliché* of which had to be re-touched without comparison with the original.

* * * * * * * *

It is regretted that owing to Mr. Beardsley's illness he has been unable to finish one of his full-page drawings to Chapter IV. of "Under the Hill," *i.e.*, "The Bacchanals of Sporion," and that its publication in consequence has had to be postponed to No. 3 of "THE SAVOY."

* * * * * * * *

For the convenience of such subscribers as desire to bind up "THE SAVOY" into volumes, is appended a print of the covers of Nos. 1 and 2, pulled on white paper, which may be bound in, in substitution for the pink cardboard covers.

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No. I. contains literary contributions by G. Bernard Shaw, Frederick Wedmore, Paul Verlaine, Max Beerbohm, Ernest Dowson, Aubrey Beardsley, Havelock Ellis, W. B. Yeats, Rudolf Dircks, Mathilde Blind, Joseph Pennell, Humphrey James, Selwyn Image, and the Editor. The illustrations include work by Charles H. Shannon, Charles Conder, Joseph Pennell, Louis Oury, W. Rothenstein, F. Sandys, J. McNeill Whistler, Max Beerbohm, Jacques E. Blanche, J. Lemmen, and Eleven Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley.

EXTRACTS FROM PRESS NOTICES ON No. I. OF "THE SAVOY."

"There is not an article in the volume that one can put down without feeling the better and the purer for it . . . . should be on every schoolroom table; every mother should present it to her daughter, for it is bound to have an ennobling and purifying influence."—*Punch.*

"The first number of a new literary and artistic venture is before us. We should describe it briefly as a 'Yellow Book' redeemed of its puerilities—as a 'Pageant' in which the illustrations are mainly original. The audacious 'decadence' of Mr. Aubrey Beardsley cannot blind the critic to the splendid decorative effect of his composition, his pattern, his 'idea.' The caricature of Mr. Beerbohm Tree by his younger brother, Max Beerbohm, is very delightful, without transcending the bounds of good taste. The eighteenth century sketch by Charles Conder wears the very spirit of the time. Of the literary contents Mr. Bernard Shaw's witty diatribe on 'Going to Church' is the most purely literary, while Mr. Arthur Symons' verses perhaps give us the most content. Articles of considerable note are contributed by Messrs. Havelock Ellis and Selwyn Image, while the inevitable 'story-teller' of the modern periodical is perhaps best found in Mr. Ernest Dowson. Not that Messrs. Wedmore, James, and Dircks are below the average of these things. Quite the contrary. Only somehow after Guy de Maupassant and Catulle Mendès, one feels that the English short story is never quite a success. The short poems by Mathilde Blind, W. B. Yeats, and Aubrey Beardsley are 'of the quality,' and the entire production does great credit to the editors, artistic and literary. The price, 2*s.* 6*d.*, is singularly low, as rival works of the same type are 5*s.* and 6*s.*, without at any rate surpassing the attractiveness of 'The Savoy.' We wish our new contemporary good speed and—'sempre avanti Savoya!'"—*Sunday Times.*

"The best thing by far is Mr. Bernard Shaw's article on 'Going to Church,' which, like everything written by this paradoxical author, is not only clever, but thoroughly sincere."—*The Times.*

"'The Savoy' declines to be considered an offshoot of the 'Yellow Book,' and although the contributors are the same, it is free from some of the offences of the older periodical. The colour of the cover is ugly, but the quarto page is handsome, and the volume is light. The chief feature is the first instalment of a story by Mr. Aubrey Beardsley, accompanied by some exceedingly clever illustrations by the writer. Mr. Yeats's lines are characteristic of that notable writer. Mr. Symons contributes a clever article on Dieppe and a pleasant translation from Verlaine."—*The Athenæum.*

"Though Mr. Aubrey Beardsley contributes several clever illustrations, the new quarterly, called 'The Savoy,' is anything but a repetition of an old enterprise. In form and character the serial which issues from the house of Mr. Leonard Smithers is as novel as it can be. As to its 'get up,' it has a large page, yet is delightfully light in the hand. It is not thick; very little of the writing in it has the fault of diffuseness, which belongs generally to bulk; and while some of its contents are chiefly entertaining, others are of a not less worthy gravity. From a writer of the distinction of Mr. Arthur Symons we had good reason to expect refined and careful editing, nor are we disappointed of it. The commonplaces of literary pessimism and the easy ingenuities of an unsavoury subject (upon which reputations of a moment have been built, as upon sand), are alike absent from 'The Savoy.' There is here some vivid, highly-wrought prose and a good share of excellent verse, among which, at the present time, nothing will attract more attention than the editor's own charmingly flexible translation of a poem from the 'Fêtes Galantes' of Paul Verlaine."—*The Academy.*

"I am glad to notice, in the first number of 'The Savoy' magazine, that Mr. Aubrey Beardsley has discovered a new type of woman. Unlike her predecessors in his artistic affections, she is almost pretty, and does not suggest that her nose is frequently in a trough."—*Sketch.*

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